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John Bateson

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF A

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOUR, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE SEVENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

vol. 1-4
1794-1797

PHILADELPHIA:

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MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF A

Convention of Delegates.

IN Convention of Delegates, from the Societies eſtabliſhed, in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, aſſembled at the City Hall, in the city of Philadelphia, January 1, 1794, it appeared, by the credentials delivered in, that the following perſons had been duly appointed to repreſent their reſpective Societies in this Convention:

Connecticut Society.

Uriah Tracy.

New-York Society.

Peter Jay Munro,
Moſes Rogers,
Thomas Franklin, junior,
William Dunlap.

New

New-Jerſey Society.

Joſeph Bloomfield,
William Coxe, junior,
John Wiſtar,
Robert Pearſon,
Franklin Davenport.

Pennſylvania Society.

William Rogers,
William Rawle,
Samuel Powel Griffitts,
Robert Patterſon,
Samuel Coates,
Benjamin Ruſh.

Delaware Society.

Warner Mifflin,
Iſaiah Rowland,
Joſeph Hodgſon,
John Pemberton.

Wilmington Society (ſtate of Delaware.)

Joſeph Warner,
Iſaac H. Starr,
Robert Coram.

Maryland Society.

Samuel Sterett,
James Wincheſter,
Joſeph Townſend,
Adam Fonerdon,
Jeſſe Hollingſworth.

Cheſter

Cheſter-town Society (ſtate of Maryland.)

Joſeph Wilkinſon,
James Maſlin,
Abraham Ridgely.

Of whom the following appeared and took their ſeats, *viz.*

Uriah Tracy,
Thomas Franklin, junior,
William Dunlap,
Joſeph Bloomfield,
William Coxe, junior,
Robert Pearſon,
William Rogers,
William Rawle,
Samuel Powel Griffitts.
Robert Patterſon,
Samuel Coates,
Benjamin Ruſh,
Warner Mifflin,
Iſaiah Rowland,
Joſeph Hodgſon,
John Pemberton,
Joſeph Warner,
Iſaac H. Starr,
Samuel Sterett,
Joſeph Townſend,
Joſeph Wilkinſon,
Abraham Ridgely.

Joſeph Bloomfield was elected Preſident of the Convention.

John

John M^cCree, one of the Secretaries of the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, was appointed Secretary, and Joſeph Fry, Doorkeeper.

Agreed, That all queſtions, which ſhall come before this Convention, be decided by a majority of the votes of the members preſent.

Benjamin Ruſh, William Dunlap, Samuel Sterett, William Rawle, and Warner Mifflin, were appointed a committee to report the objects proper for the conſideration of this Convention, and the beſt plan for carrying the ſame into execution.

Adjourned.

JANUARY SECOND.

Adam Fonerdon and Jeſſe Hollingſworth, two of the Delegates from the Maryland Society, appeared and took their ſeats.

Abſalom Baird, delegated to repreſent the Waſhington Society in Pennſylvania, appeared, produced his credentials, and took his ſeat.

A letter, directed to the Convention, from Robert Pleaſants, Chairman of the committee of correſpondence of the Virginia Society, was preſented and read. By this letter it appears, that Samuel Pleaſants and Iſrael Pleaſants, of the city of Philadelphia, were appointed to repreſent that Society, in this Convention;

Convention; or, in caſe of their declining or being prevented from acting, the Convention were left at liberty to nominate two other members as their repreſentatives.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That as information, and an unreſerved compariſon of one another's ſentiments, relative to the important cauſe in which we are ſeverally engaged, are our principal objects; and as the perſons appointed by the Virginia Society, are not citizens of that ſtate, nor members of that Society—to admit them, or, according to their propoſal, for us to elect others as their repreſentatives, would be highly improper.

In this letter was encloſed an authentic account of ſeveral veſſels lately fitted out in Virginia, for the African ſlave-trade.

The Preſident was directed to acknowledge the receipt of this letter, to inform the Virginia Society of the reſolution of the Convention thereon, and to thank them for the above intereſting information.

Benjamin Ruſh, from the committee appointed to bring in a report on the objects proper for the conſideration of this Convention, and the beſt plan for carrying the ſame into execution, produced one, which being conſidered and amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

Firſt,

Firſt, That a memorial be preſented to Congreſs, praying that Body to prohibit, by law, the citizens of the United States, from carrying on a commerce, in ſlaves, for the ſupply of foreign nations; and, alſo, to prohibit foreigners from fitting their ſhips in the ports of the United States, for the purpoſe of carrying on the ſlave-trade.

Second, That memorials and petitions be preſented to the Legiſlatures of ſuch of the ſtates as have not yet paſſed laws to prohibit the importation of ſlaves—to enact laws for that purpoſe; and, alſo, to the Legiſlatures of the individual ſtates—to prevent ſlaves from being forcibly carried away; and to grant to ſuch of them as have been, or may be emancipated, ſuch a participation in civil privileges, as, by the diffuſion of knowledge among them, they may, from time to time, be qualified to enjoy.

Third, That addreſſes be ſent to the different Abolition Societies, recommending to them to continue their zeal and exertions, in behalf of ſuch of our African brethren as are yet in bondage; alſo, to uſe their utmoſt endeavours to have the children of the free and other Africans, inſtructed in common literature—in the principles of virtue and religion, and afterwards in uſeful mechanical arts; thereby to prepare them for becoming good citizens of the United States.

Fourth

Fourth, That an addreſs be written, and publiſhed to the citizens of the United States, to impreſs upon them, in the moſt forcible manner, the obligations of juſtice, humanity and benevolence towards our African brethren, whether in bondage or free, and to requeſt their concurrence with us in all the objects of the preſent Convention.

Fifth, That it be recommended to the different Abolition Societies, to appoint Delegates to meet in Convention, at Philadelphia, on the firſt Wedneſday of January, 1795, and on the ſame day, in every year afterwards, until the great objects of their original aſſociation be accompliſhed.

The following committees were then appointed, *viz.*

William Rawle, William Rogers, and William Dunlap, to prepare a memorial to Congreſs, as propoſed in the firſt ſection of the above report.

Samuel Sterett, William Rawle, and William Dunlap, to prepare memorials to the different Legiſlatures, as propoſed in the ſecond ſection.

Samuel P. Griffitts, William Coxe, junior, and Abraham Ridgely, to prepare addreſſes to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, as propoſed in the third ſection.

Benjamin

Benjamin Ruſh, Warner Mifflin, and Iſaac H. Starr, to prepare an addreſs to the citizens of the United States, as propoſed in the fourth ſection.

Adjourned.

JANUARY THIRD.

Samuel Sterett, from the committee appointed to prepare memorials to the Legiſlatures of the different ſtates, preſented two eſſays; one to be preſented to the Legiſlatures of ſuch of the ſtates, as have not paſſed laws to prohibit the importation of ſlaves; and the other to be preſented to the Legiſlatures of the individual ſtates, who have not aboliſhed domeſtic ſlavery; which were read, and ordered to lie on the table.

Adjourned.

JANUARY FOURTH.

Samuel P. Griffitts, from the committee appointed for the purpoſe, reported an addreſs to the different Abolition Societies; which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

Benjamin Ruſh, from the committee appointed for the purpoſe, reported an addreſs to the citizens of the United States; which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The

The memorial, addreſſed to the ſtates who have not enacted laws to prohibit the importation of ſlaves, was read a ſecond time, and, being conſidered, was, after ſome amendments, agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the *of the*
State of

The memorial and petition of the Delegates, from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT, actuated by a deſire to vindicate the honour of the United States, the rights of man, and the dignity of human nature, the Abolition Societies, in various and diſtant parts of the Union, have delegated your memorialiſts, to conſider of, and endeavour to promote, ſuch plans as may tend to diminiſh the number of ſlaves in the United States, meliorate their ſituation, and eventually eradicate an evil, entailed upon us by our anceſtors; which muſt, as long as it exiſts, be conſidered as a diſhonourable ſtain upon a country, the baſis of whoſe political happineſs is man's equal rights.

We, therefore, earneſtly entreat you, to take into conſideration the propriety and neceſſity

ceſſity of enacting laws, to prohibit the importation of ſlaves into your ſtate, from any foreign country, or from any neighbouring ſtate.

We preſume not here to expatiate, to the Repreſentatives of an enlightened people, on the injuſtice, immorality, and dreadful tendency of the ſlave-trade; fully perſuaded that men, in your reſpectable ſituation, are thinking men, and that all who reflect on this ſubject muſt have been long convinced of theſe truths. But, Gentlemen, the evil exiſts, and ſurely it is well worthy of your conſideration; it is an evil of great magnitude, and to prevent its growth, and gradually to deſtroy it, is an object of weighty import.

Permit us then reſpectfully to ſuggeſt, that the firſt ſtep to be taken is to prohibit an accumulation of the evil, by any further importation. Many of your ſiſter ſtates have adopted this meaſure, and have not found any diſadvantages ariſing therefrom. On the contrary, they have ſhewn their approbation of the meaſure, on trial, by enacting ſubſequent laws, giving to the firſt additional force and efficacy.

Your memorialiſts therefore hope, that, on conſideration, you will add your ſtate to the number of thoſe which prohibit the importation of ſlaves; and thus contribute to aboliſh a practice, no leſs deſtructive to the intereſts of the United States, than to the general cauſe of humanity.

Inſtead

Inſtead of the laſt paragraph, the following was agreed to be ſubſtituted in the memorial to be preſented to the Legiſlature of South Carolina, *viz.*

Your memorialiſts therefore hope, that, on conſideration, you will make perpetual the law which you have already enacted for the above purpoſe; thereby adding your ſtate to the number of thoſe which totally prohibit the importation of ſlaves, and thus contribute to aboliſh a practice, no leſs deſtructive to the intereſts of the United States, than to the general cauſe of humanity.

The memorial addreſſed to the individual ſtates, who have not yet aboliſhed domeſtic ſlavery, was read a ſecond time; and, being conſidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the *of the*
State of

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT, having been appointed and convened for the general purpoſes of conſidering and endeavouring to ſuggeſt the moſt eligible

eligible plans for promoting the abolition of ſlavery; and, where its ſuppreſſion cannot be obtained, to effect its alleviation, they have been unavoidably led to contemplate, how much remains in the power of the Legiſlature to perform.

It has, therefore, become their duty, reſpectfully to repreſent to your Houſe, ſome of thoſe evils which are ſtill permitted to continue; and, in the name of fellow-men, to ſolicit its protection, its aſſiſtance, and its juſtice.

Some of the principal evils, foremoſt in the group of calamities, incident to the practice of ſlavery, your memorialiſts take the liberty of ſpecifying.

Negroes, conſidered merely as ſubjects of property, are frequently carried off, by force, from their deareſt connections, and tranſported to places, where even the ſeverity of their former bondage is encreaſed; where a new climate, rigid laws, and deſpotic manners, render their deſpair complete.

As ſubjects of property, they likewiſe become the objects of plunder; and the evils already mentioned, are aggravated by the violence with which they are executed.

Until a radical abolition of ſlavery itſelf, by exploding the general opinion, that the colour of a man is evidence of his deprivation of the rights of man, ſhall afford more

effectual

effectual ſecurity, it is preſumed, that the legiſlative protection of abſolute prohibitions, and of adequate penalties, may be reaſonably expected.

The voice of reaſon, and the impulſe of humanity, always at war with injuſtice, gradually tend to the emancipation of ſlaves; but laws, often made in earlier times, or for different objects, occaſionally interpoſe between the intention and the act. To enumerate thoſe obſtacles to individual emancipation which ſtill remain, ſometimes obvious, and ſometimes concealed in the maſs of municipal regulations, would exceed the reaſonable bounds of the preſent application; but, with a knowledge of their exiſtence, and a ſenſe of their injuſtice, your memorialiſts reſpectfully unite a requeſt, that individual emancipation may, if not promoted by encouragements, at leaſt be relieved from incidental penalties.

Yet, in breaking the fetters, and removing the ſorrows of ſlavery, what do we effect, if the new-made man is relieved from the power of one, only to be ſenſible of his hopeleſs inferiority to all? As the opinions of men continue to be regulated, we know, that the negro has little to expect from the diſtribution of public functions;—ſtill there are certain rights, not privileges, certain claims, not favours, to which, we conceive, legiſlative juſtice might ſafely admit him.

Of

Of what uſe is his hard-earned property, if the law does not ſpread its defence around him? Or, how is his liberty ſecured, if he loſes little more than the name of a ſlave? Donations ſo ineffectual, and benevolence ſo incomplete, can only excite diſſatisfaction, and ſuppreſs induſtry. To acquire an uſeful member of the community, we ſhould hold up to his view a participation in its privileges. We promote induſtry, by rewarding it, and encourage knowledge, by rendering it the means of perceiving happineſs.

In addition to the objects already mentioned, your memorialiſts, therefore, reſpectfully ſolicit the Legiſlature to grant to ſuch as have been, or may be emancipated, ſuch a participation in civil privileges, as, by the diffuſion of knowledge among them, they may, from time to time, be qualified to enjoy.

Inſtead of the three laſt paragraphs, the following was agreed to be ſubſtituted, in the memorial to be preſented to the ſeveral Legiſlatures of the ſtates of Delaware, New-Jerſey, New-York, Connecticut, and Rhode-Iſland, *viz.*

Our preſent application to the Legiſlature of terminates with theſe requeſts:

We have obſerved, and we acknowledge, with pleaſure, the liberality of its conſtitution, and the humanity of its laws.

As

As the prejudices, which thoſe laws were originally intended to combat, are gradually diſpelled, their uſeful effects will become more obvious and permanent. Liberality and humanity will extend from the archives of your ſtate to the practice of your citizens. It will be confeſſed, that none of your proviſions, avowing and ſecuring the rights of fellow-creatures, ought to excite repentance or diſcourage imitation. It will be found, that an increaſe of the uſeful qualities of the African citizen, will keep pace with the kindneſs and protection of which he partakes; and, in future, the dignified office of the Legiſlature, will not be to repeal or reſtrain, but to enlarge and enforce, the proviſions in his favour.

And in the memorial to be preſented to the Legiſlature of the ſtate of Pennſylvania, the following paragraph was agreed to be ſubſtituted, *viz.*

To the Legiſlature of *that ſtate* which, in favour of the unhappy African, firſt diſpelled the clouds of prejudice, and firſt extended the hand of conſolation, no further requeſt, on our part, at preſent, remains. We have obſerved, and we acknowledge with pleaſure, the liberality of its conſtitution, and the humanity of its laws. We have ſeen that the effect of

of none of their provifions, avowing and fecuring the rights of fellow-creatures, has excited repentance, or difcouraged imitation; we have witneffed an increafe of the ufeful qualities in the African citizen, keeping pace with the kindnefs and protection of which he partakes; and we have found the legiflative attention employed, not in repealing and reftraining, but in enlarging and enforcing, its former provifions in his favour.

JANUARY SIXTH.

William Rogers, from the committee appointed for the purpofe, reported a memorial to Congrefs, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The addrefs to the Abolition Societies was read a fecond time, and, being confidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the abolition of Slavery, &c.

IT is with peculiar pleafure we inform you, that the Convention of Delegates, from moft of the Abolition Societies formed in the United States, met in this city, have, with much unanimity, gone through the bufinefs which came before them. The advantages to be derived from this meeting are fo evident

dent, that we have agreed earneſtly to recommend to you, that a ſimilar meeting be annually convened, until the great object of our aſſociation—the liberty of our fellow-men—ſhall be fully and unequivocally eſtabliſhed.

To obtain this important end, we conceive that it is proper, conſtantly to have in view the neceſſity of uſing our utmoſt and unremitting endeavours to aboliſh ſlavery, and to protect and meliorate the condition of the enſlaved, and of the emancipated. The irreſiſtible, though ſilent progreſs of the principles of true philoſophy, will do much for us; but, placed in a ſituation well adapted to promote theſe principles, it ſurely becomes us to improve every occaſion of forwarding the great deſigns of our inſtitutions. For this purpoſe, we think it proper to requeſt you to unite with us, in the moſt ſtrenuous exertions, to effect a compliance with the laws in favour of emancipation; and, where theſe laws are deficient, reſpectful applications to the State-Legiſlatures ſhould not be diſcontinued, however unſucceſsful they may prove. —Let us remember, for our conſolation and encouragement in theſe caſes, that, although intereſt and prejudice may oppoſe, yet the fundamental principles of our government, as well as the progreſſive and rapid influence of reaſon and religion, are in our favour—

an

and let us never be diſcouraged by a fear of the event, from performing any taſk of duty, when clearly pointed out; for it is an undoubted truth—that no good effort can ever be entirely loſt.

While contemplating the great principles of our aſſociations, we cannot refrain from recommending to your attention the propriety of uſing your endeavours to form, as circumſtances may require, Abolition Societies in your own, and in the neighbouring ſtates; as, for want of the concurrence of others, the good intentions and efforts of many an honeſt and zealous individual, are often defeated.

But, while we wiſh to draw your attention to theſe objects, there is another which we cannot paſs over. We are all too much accuſtomed to the reproaches of the enemies of our cauſe, on the ſubject of the ignorance and crimes of the Blacks, not to wiſh that they were ill-founded. And though, to us, it is ſufficiently apparent, that this ignorance, and theſe crimes, are owing to the degrading ſtate of ſlavery; yet, may we not, with confidence, attempt to do away the reproach?—Let us uſe our endeavours to have the children of the emancipated, and even of the enſlaved Africans, inſtructed in common literature—in the principles of virtue and religion, and in thoſe mechanic arts which will

keep

keep them moſt conſtantly employed, and, of courſe, will leſs ſubject them to idleneſs and debauchery; and thus prepare them for becoming good citizens of the United States: a privilege and elevation to which we look forward with pleaſure, and which we believe can be beſt merited by habits of induſtry and virtue.

We ſhall tranſmit you an exact copy of our proceedings, with the different memorials and addreſſes which to us have appeared neceſſary at this time; and would recommend to you the propriety of giving full powers to the Delegates who are to meet in the year 1795; believing, that the buſineſs of that Convention will be rendered more eaſy and more extenſively uſeful, if you ſend, by your Repreſentatives, certified copies of the conſtitution and laws of your Society, and of all the laws exiſting in your ſtate concerning ſlavery, with ſuch facts relative to this buſineſs, as may aſcertain the reſpective ſituation of ſlavery, and of the Blacks in general.

The addreſs to the citizens of the United States was read a ſecond time, and, being conſidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To

To the Citizens of the United States.

The addreſs of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Friends and Fellow-citizens,

UNITED to you by the ties of citizenſhip, and partakers with you of the bleſſings of a free government, we take the liberty of addreſſing you upon a ſubject, highly intereſting to the credit and proſperity of the United States.

It is the glory of our country to have originated a ſyſtem of oppoſition to the commerce in that part of our fellow-creatures, who compoſe the nations of Africa.

Much has been done by the citizens of ſome of the ſtates to aboliſh this diſgraceful traffic, and to improve the condition of thoſe unhappy people, whom the ignorance, or the avarice of our anceſtors had bequeathed to us as ſlaves; but the evil ſtill continues, and our country is yet diſgraced by laws and practices, which level the creature man with a part of the brute creation.

Many reaſons concur in perſuading us to aboliſh domeſtic ſlavery in our country.

It

It is inconſiſtent with the ſafety of the liberties of the United States.

Freedom and ſlavery cannot long exiſt together. An unlimited power over the time, labour, and poſterity of our fellow-creatures, neceſſarily unfits men for diſcharging the public and private duties of citizens of a republic.

It is inconſiſtent with ſound policy; in expoſing the ſtates which permit it, to all thoſe evils which inſurrections, and the moſt reſentful war have introduced into one of the richeſt iſlands in the Weſt-Indies.

It is unfriendly to the preſent exertions of the inhabitants of Europe, in favour of liberty. What people will advocate freedom, with a zeal proportioned to its bleſſings, while they view the pureſt republic in the world tolerating in its boſom a body of ſlaves?

In vain has the tyranny of kings been rejected, while we permit in our country a domeſtic deſpotiſm, which involves, in its nature, moſt of the vices and miſeries that we have endeavoured to avoid.

It is degrading to our rank as men in the ſcale of being. Let us uſe our reaſon and ſocial affections for the purpoſes for which they were given, or ceaſe to boaſt a pre-eminence over animals, that are unpolluted with our crimes.

But

But higher motives to juſtice and humanity towards our fellow-creatures remain yet to be mentioned.

Domeſtic ſlavery is repugnant to the principles of Chriſtianity. It proſtrates every benevolent and juſt principle of action in the human heart. It is rebellion againſt the authority of a common FATHER. It is a practical denial of the extent and efficacy of the death of a common SAVIOUR. It is an uſurpation of the prerogative of the GREAT SOVEREIGN of the univerſe, who has ſolemnly claimed an excluſive property in the ſouls of men.

But if this view of the enormity of the evil of domeſtic ſlavery ſhould not affect us, there is one conſideration more which ought to alarm and impreſs us, eſpecially at the preſent juncture.

It is a violation of a divine precept of univerſal juſtice, which has, in no inſtance, eſcaped with impunity.

The crimes of nations, as well as of individuals, are often deſignated in their puniſhments; and we conceive it to be no forced conſtruction, of ſome of the calamities which now diſtreſs or impend our country, to believe that they are the meaſure of evils, which we have meted to others.

The ravages committed upon many of our fellow-citizens by the Indians, and the depredations upon the liberty and commerce of

others

others of the citizens of the United States by the Algerines, both unite in proclaiming to us, in the moſt forcible language, " to looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to break every yoke, to undo heavy burthens, and to let the oppreſſed go free."

We ſhall conclude this addreſs by recommending to you,

Firſt, To refrain immediately from that ſpecies of rapine and murder which has improperly been ſoftened with the name of the African trade. It is Indian cruelty, and Algerine piracy, in another form.

Secondly, To form Societies, in every ſtate, for the purpoſe of promoting the abolition of the ſlave-trade, of domeſtic ſlavery, the relief of perſons unlawfully held in bondage, and for the improvement of the condition of Africans, and their deſcendants amongſt us.

The Societies, which we repreſent, have beheld, with triumph, the ſucceſs of their exertions, in many inſtances, in favour of their African brethren; and, in a full reliance upon the continuance of divine ſupport and direction, they humbly hope, their labours will never ceaſe, while there exiſts a ſingle ſlave in the United States.

JANUARY,

JANUARY SEVENTH.

The memorial to Congreſs was read a ſecond time, and, being conſidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States in Congreſs aſſembled.

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT your memorialiſts, having been appointed, by various Societies, in different parts of the Union, for the benevolent purpoſe of endeavouring to alleviate or ſuppreſs ſome of the miſeries of their fellow-creatures, deem it their duty to approach the Congreſs of the United States with a reſpectful repreſentation of certain evils,—the unauthoriſed acts of a few, but injurious to the intereſt and reputation of all.

America, dignified by being the firſt in modern times, to aſſert and defend the equal rights of man, ſuffers her fame to be tarniſhed, and her example to be weakened, by a cruel commerce,

commerce, carried on from ſome of her ports, for the ſupply of foreign nations with African ſlaves.

To enumerate the horrors incident to this inhuman traffic, of which all the worſt paſſions of mankind form the principal materials, would be unneceſſary, when we offer to prove its exiſtence.

Nor is it requiſite to conſume much of your valuable time in the endeavour to prove it a national injury.

While it expoſes the lives and the morals of our ſeamen to peculiar danger, it renders all complaints of retaliation unjuſt; for thoſe who deprive others of their liberty, for the benefit of foreign countries, cannot reaſonably murmur, if, by other foreign nations, they are deprived of their own.

True it is, that the captivity at Algiers is not without a hope, and that the ſlavery of the Weſt-Indies terminates only with exiſtence; but, in proportion as that to which we are acceſſary is more ſevere, the duty of deſiſting from it becomes more urgent.

Your memorialiſts obſerve, and mention with pleaſure, that this venal cruelty is at preſent confined to a few ports, and a few perſons. Hence it becomes more eaſy to deſtroy a degrading exception from the general

dignity

dignity of our commerce, and to reſtore our citizens to their former fame, of preferring the ſpirit of freedom to the deluſions of intereſt.

An additional reaſon for the legiſlative interference, now requeſted, ariſes from the natural conſequence of the facts already ſuggeſted.

Foreigners, ſeduced by the example, and believing that they may commit without reproach, what American citizens commit with impunity, avail themſelves of our ports to fit out their veſſels for the ſame traffic. Thus we become the accomplices of their offences, and partake of the guilt without the miſerable conſolation of ſharing its profits.

Your memorialiſts, therefore, truſting that a compliance with their requeſt, will not exceed the conſtitutional powers of Congreſs, nor injure the intereſts or diſturb the tranquillity of any part of the Union, reſpectfully pray, that a law may be paſſed, prohibiting the traffic carried on by citizens of the United States for the ſupply of ſlaves to foreign nations, and preventing foreigners from fitting out veſſels for the ſlave-trade in the ports of the United States.

Reſolved, That the Preſident do tranſmit to Granville Sharpe, Chairman of the Committee of the London Society, formed for the

the purpoſe of effecting the abolition of the ſlave-trade, a copy of the proceedings of this Convention.

That the addreſs directed to be preſented to Congreſs, be ſigned by the Preſident of this Convention, and atteſted by the Secretary; and that the ſame be tranſmitted, by the Preſident, to the Speaker of the Houſe of Repreſentatives.

That the addreſſes to the ſeveral Legiſlatures, be ſigned and atteſted as above mentioned; and be tranſmitted to the reſpective Preſidents, or Speakers, of one branch of the Legiſlature, or laid before the reſpective Houſes, in ſuch manner as the Preſident of this Convention ſhall find expedient.

That the addreſs to the people of the United States, be ſigned and atteſted as above mentioned; and that the ſame be publiſhed in one or more of the news-papers in each ſtate; and that Uriah Tracy, William Dunlap, William Coxe, junior, Samuel Coates, Joſeph Warner, Abraham Ridgley, and Joſeph Townſend, be a committee to procure the publication thereof, and to tranſmit the addreſſes to the Abolition Societies.

That one thouſand five hundred copies of the minutes and proceedings of the Convention be printed; that one hundred copies be ſent to each of the Abolition Societies now eſtabliſhed; and that Samuel Coates, Samuel

P. Griffitts,

P. Griffitts, and Robert Patterſon, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the proceedings of this Convention.

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

JOHN M^c^CREE, *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, January 7th. 1794.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SECOND

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

+ 7576.2

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE SEVENTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIVE, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNR. NUMBER EIGHTY,
CHESNUT-STREET, EIGHT DOORS BELOW THIRD-STREET,

M DCC XCV.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SECOND

Convention of Delegates.

Philadelphia, Wedneſday, January 7th. 1795.

AGREEABLY to the recommendation of the Convention, held in this city laſt year, a number of Delegates, from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, aſſembled, this day, at the City Hall, when, by the credentials produced, it appeared, that the following perſons had been choſen to repreſent their reſpective Societies in this Convention:

Connecticut Society.

Jonathan Edwards,
Uriah Tracy,
Zephaniah Swift.

New

New-York Society.

John Murray, junior,
William Johnſon,
Lawrence Embree,
William Dunlap,
William Walton Woolſey.

Pennſylvania Society.

William Rawle,
Robert Patterſon,
Benjamin Ruſh,
Samuel Coates,
Caſpar Wiſtar,
James Todd,
Benjamin Say.

Delaware Society.

Richard Baſſett,
John Ralſton,
Allen M^cLane,
Caleb Boyer.

Wilmington Society (ſtate of Delaware.)

Cyrus Newlin,
James A. Byard,
Joſeph Warner,
William Poole.

Maryland Society.

Samucl Sterett,
Adam Fonerdon,
Joſeph Townſend,

Joſeph

Joſeph Thornburgh,
George Buchanan,
John Bankſon,
Philip Moore.

Cheſter-town Society (ſtate of Maryland.)

Edward Scott,
James Houſton.

Of whom the following appeared and took their ſeats, *viz.*

Jonathan Edwards,
Uriah Tracy,
Zephaniah Swift,
William Johnſon,
Lawrence Embree,
William Dunlap,
William Walton Woolſey,
William Rawle,
Robert Patterſon,
Benjamin Ruſh,
Samuel Coates,
Caſpar Wiſtar,
James Todd,
Benjamin Say,
Richard Baſſett,
Caleb Boyer,
Cyrus Newlin,
Joſeph Warner,
Samuel Sterett,
Joſeph Townſend,
Joſeph Thornburgh,

John

John Bankſon,
Philip Moore,
Edward Scott,
James Houſton.

The Convention proceeded to the election of a Preſident, and, on counting the ballots, it appeared, that Benjamin Ruſh was duly elected.

Walter Franklin, one of the Secretaries of the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, was appointed Secretary, and Joſeph Fry, Doorkeeper.

Agreed, That all queſtions, which ſhall come before this Convention, be decided by a majority of the votes of the members preſent, and that every motion, when ſeconded, ſhall, if required by the Preſident, or any member, be reduced to writing.

The addreſs, from the laſt Convention, to the different Abolition Societies in the United States, was then read; after which, ſeveral written and verbal communications were made.

Jonathan Edwards, William Dunlap, Caſpar Wiſtar, Cyrus Newlin, Caleb Boyer, Philip Moore, and James Houſton, were appointed a committee to conſider of, and report, the objects proper for the attention of this Convention, and the moſt ſuitable means of attaining the ſame.

Ordered,

Ordered, That the ſeveral communications, made this evening, be referred to the above committee, and that the members of the Convention be requeſted to impart to them ſuch information as they may poſſeſs, relative to the object of their appointment.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at five o'clock.

January 8th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Jonathan Edwards, Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolſey, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Richard Baſſett, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houſton.

The Preſident being abſent, Uriah Tracy was appointed to preſide for the evening.

An extract, from the minutes of the proceedings of a general meeting of the New Jerſey Abolition Society, was read, by which it appeared, that Joſeph Bloomfield, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, John Wiſtar, and Franklin Davenport, were elected to repreſent that Society in this Convention, of whom, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, and Franklin Davenport, appeared and took their ſeats.

The committee, appointed at the laſt meeting, not being prepared to make a final report, were continued.

Several communications, from the New Jerſey Society, were preſented by their Delegates, and referred to the ſaid committee.

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at five o'clock.

January 9th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Jonathan Edwards, Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolſey, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, Franklin Davenport, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Richard Baſſett, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Samuel Sterett, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houſton.

A letter, from the Preſident of the Providence Abolition Society, was read; by which it appeared, that Theodore Foſter and George Benſon were appointed to repreſent that Society in this Convention.

A letter, from the Waſhington Abolition Society in Pennſylvania, was, alſo, read, notifying the appointment of Thomas Scott, Abſalom

Abſalom Baird, and Samuel Clark, as Repreſentatives of the ſaid Society, in this Convention.

The Secretary was directed to inform ſuch of thoſe gentlemen as are now in this city, of the receipt and purport of the above letters.

The Convention being informed, that the abſence of Joſeph Bloomfield, of New Jerſey, was occaſioned by ſickneſs, mention thereof was ordered to be made on the Minutes.

The committee, appointed to conſider of, and report, the objects proper for the conſideration of the Convention, and the moſt ſuitable means of attaining the ſame, made report, which, after amendment, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

Firſt, That an addreſs be made, by this Convention, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, recommending to them, to ſend Deputies to a Convention, ſimilar to the preſent, to be holden in Philadelphia the firſt day of January, in the year 1796; alſo, that it be recommended to thoſe Societies, who have not ſent, to this Convention, complete copies of the laws of their ſeveral ſtates, relative to ſlavery, to ſend, to the next Convention, copies of all ſuch laws, both thoſe which are now in force, and thoſe which have been repealed; and to ſend, to the next, and every ſucceeding, Convention,

an accurate liſt of their officers for the time being, together with an account of the place of their abode, and of the offices, civil, military, or eccleſiaſtic, which they may ſuſtain, with the number of members of which they conſiſt: that it be further recommended, to the ſeveral Societies, to ſend, annually, to the Convention, an accurate liſt of all thoſe perſons who have been relieved and liberated by their agency; and, alſo, an account of ſuch trials and deciſions of courts, the general knowledge of which they ſhall judge ſubſervient to the cauſe of abolition: that it be recommended to the ſeveral Societies, to inſtitute public periodical diſcourſes, or orations, on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition; alſo, to continue, without remiſſion, and in ſuch ways as they ſhall, reſpectively, judge moſt likely to be ſucceſsful, their exertions to procure an amelioration of the laws of their reſpective ſtates, relative to the Blacks; and, at the ſame time, to give particular attention to the education of the black children: and, as an hiſtorical review of the legiſlative proviſions, relative to ſlavery, in the ſeveral ſtates of the Union, from their reſpective ſettlements to the preſent time, would be conducive to the general benefit,—that it be further recommended, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, to take meaſures for procuring the materials, and promoting the publication, of ſuch a work; and

that

that a communication of the ſteps taken, in purſuance of this recommendation, be made to the enſuing Convention.

Second, That the Convention take into conſideration the caſe of thoſe perſons, who, having been made free by the republic of France, are ſtill holden in ſlavery by thoſe who have emigrated into the United States from the territories of the ſaid republic; and that the Convention deviſe ſome lawful meaſures for their relief:—we barely ſuggeſt, whether an application to the French ambaſſador be, or be not, proper in the caſe.

Third, That the Convention take into conſideration the means of improving the condition of the Blacks, who are, or may be, made free in the different ſtates, and of preventing the inconveniences that may ariſe from the degraded ſtate of the Negroes in the United States.

Fourth, That it be recommended, to the Society of New Jerſey, to enter on proper meaſures to procure an amendment of the law of that ſtate, prohibiting the manumiſſion of ſlaves of a greater age than thirty-five years.

William Johnſon, Franklin Davenport, and Samuel Coates, were appointed to prepare an addreſs, as propoſed in the firſt and fourth ſections of the above report.

The

The ſecond ſection was referred to William Walton Woolſey, William Rawle, James Todd, and Edward Scott, to report thereon.

The third ſection was referred to Lawrence Embree, Caſpar Wiſtar, Benjamin Say, Joſeph Warner, and Samuel Sterett, to report thereon.

Samuel Coates, James Sloan, and Joſeph Townſend, were appointed a committee to enquire, and report, concerning the meaſures taken, in purſuance of the ſeveral reſolutions of the former Convention, for tranſmitting memorials and addreſſes to the Congreſs of the United States, and the Legiſlatures of individual ſtates.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at ſix o'clock.

January 10*th.* 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolſey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, James Houſton.

Theodore

Theodore Foſter, delegated to repreſent the Providence Society, appeared and took his ſeat.

The committee, to whom was referred the ſecond ſection of the report of the committee of arrangement, reported, that they had taken the ſubject into conſideration; that it appeared to them, to be within the province of the ſeveral Societies to act therein; and that the Convention ſhould recommend, to the ſaid Societies, to exert themſelves for the liberation of the perſons deſcribed in the ſaid report, ſo far as may be conſiſtent with the laws of their reſpective ſtates.

Ordered, That the ſaid report be accepted.

Adjourned till Monday evening next at ſix o'clock.

Monday evening, January 12th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Jonathan Edwards, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foſter, William Dunlap, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Walton Woolſey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houſton.

The

The Preſident being abſent, Zephaniah Swift was appointed to preſide for the evening.

The committee, appointed to enquire concerning the meaſures taken, in purſuance of the reſolutions of the former Convention, for tranſmitting memorials and addreſſes to the Congreſs of the United States, and the Legiſlatures of individual ſtates,—preſented the following report, which was read and accepted, *viz.*

The committee, appointed to enquire if the memorials to Congreſs, and the different ſtate Legiſlatures, were preſented agreeably to the order of the Convention laſt year,—report,

That the memorial was preſented to the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States, in Congreſs aſſembled, who took the ſame into conſideration, and granted the prayer thereof by enacting a law, of which the following is a copy:

An Act to prohibit the carrying on the Slave-trade from the United States to any foreign place or country.

Section I. BE *it enacted by the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States of America, in Congreſs aſſembled*, That no citizen or citizens of the United States, or foreigner, or any other perſon

perſon coming into, or reſiding within the ſame, ſhall, for himſelf or any other perſon whatſoever, either as maſter, factor or owner, build, fit, equip, load or otherwiſe prepare any ſhip or veſſel, within any port or place of the ſaid United States, nor ſhall cauſe any ſhip or veſſel to ſail from any port or place within the ſame, for the purpoſe of carrying on any trade or traffic in ſlaves, to any foreign country; or for the purpoſe of procuring, from any foreign kingdom, place or country, the inhabitants of ſuch kingdom, place or country, to be tranſported to any foreign country, port or place whatever, to be ſold or diſpoſed of, as ſlaves: And if any ſhip or veſſel ſhall be ſo fitted out, as aforeſaid, for the ſaid purpoſes, or ſhall be cauſed to ſail, ſo as aforeſaid, every ſuch ſhip or veſſel, her tackle, furniture, apparel and other appurtenances, ſhall be forfeited to the United States; and ſhall be liable to be ſeized, proſecuted and condemned, in any of the circuit courts or diſtrict court for the diſtrict, where the ſaid ſhip or veſſel may be found and ſeized.

Section II. *And be it further enacted*, That all and every perſon, ſo building, fitting out, equipping, loading, or otherwiſe preparing, or ſending away, any ſhip or veſſel, knowing, or intending, that the ſame ſhall be employed in ſuch trade or buſineſs, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act,

or

or any ways aiding or abetting therein, ſhall ſeverally forfeit and pay the ſum of two thouſand dollars, one moiety thereof, to the uſe of the United States, and the other moiety thereof, to the uſe of him or her, who ſhall ſue for and proſecute the ſame.

Section III. *And be it further enacted*, That the owner, maſter or factor of each and every foreign ſhip or veſſel, clearing out for any of the coaſts or kingdoms of Africa, or ſuſpected to be intended for the ſlave-trade, and the ſuſpicion being declared to the officer of the cuſtoms, by any citizen, on oath or affirmation, and ſuch information being to the ſatisfaction of the ſaid officer, ſhall firſt give bond with ſufficient ſureties, to the Treaſurer of the United States, that none of the natives of Africa, or any other foreign country or place, ſhall be taken on board the ſaid ſhip or veſſel, to be tranſported, or ſold as ſlaves, in any other foreign port or place whatever, within nine months thereafter.

Section IV. *And be it further enacted*, That if any citizen or citizens of the United States ſhall, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, take on board, receive or tranſport any ſuch perſons, as above deſcribed, in this act, for the purpoſe of ſelling them as ſlaves, as aforeſaid, he or they ſhall forfeit and pay, for each and every perſon,

ſo

ſo received on board, tranſported, or ſold as aforeſaid, the ſum of two hundred dollars, to be recovered in any court of the United States proper to try the ſame; the one moiety thereof, to the uſe of the United States, and the other moiety to the uſe of ſuch perſon or perſons, who ſhall ſue for and proſecute the ſame.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG.
Speaker of the Houſe of Repreſentatives.

JOHN ADAMS, *Vice-Preſident of the United States, and Preſident of the Senate.*

APPROVED—March the twenty-ſecond, 1794.

G°: WASHINGTON, *Preſident of the United States.*

That the memorial, to the General Aſſembly of Connecticut, was preſented, accompanied with a memorial from the Abolition Society of that ſtate; whereupon, a bill was originated, and paſſed, in the Houſe of Repreſentatives, to aboliſh ſlavery in Connecticut; which bill was negatived by a ſmall majority in the legiſlative Council.

That the memorials, to the Aſſemblies of New Jerſey and Pennſylvania, were preſented, but not acted upon.

That the memorial, to the Delaware Aſſembly, was preſented late in the ſeſſion, but no order taken thereon.

That the memorials, to the Legiſlatures of New York, Maryland, and Virginia, by reaſon of accidents, were not preſented.

That no certain information is yet obtained, that the memorials were preſented to the Legiſlatures of North Carolina, South Carolina, or Georgia, although your committee have reaſon to believe they were preſented, as they were forwarded by a careful perſon.

The committee, appointed to prepare an addreſs, as propoſed in the firſt and fourth ſections of the report of the committee of arrangement, preſented one, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The committee, to whom was referred the third ſection of the report of the committee of arrangement, made report, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The following reſolutions were then adopted, *viz.*

Reſolved, That addreſſes be prepared and preſented to the Legiſlatures of thoſe ſtates, which have not paſſed laws for preventing the importation of ſlaves.

Samuel Coates preſented an eſſay of an addreſs on this ſubject, to the ſtate of Georgia, which, with the above reſolution, was referred to William Dunlap, William Rawle and Joſeph Townſend.

Reſolved, That a memorial be tranſmitted to the Legiſlature of South Carolina, requeſting a continuance of the act for preventing the importation of ſlaves.

Jonathan Edwards preſented a draught of an addreſs on this ſubject, which, with the reſolution,

reſolution, was referred to the above committee, who were authorized to embrace ſuch other objects, in the memorials, as they might judge proper.

Reſolved, That Theodore Foſter, William Rawle, and William Johnſon, be a committee to conſider, and report, whether any, and what, amendments, appear neceſſary in the act, paſſed by the Congreſs of the United States, prohibiting the carrying on the ſlave-trade to any foreign place or country.

Reſolved, That it be recommended to the ſeveral Societies, to tranſmit, to the next Convention, an account of the number of free Negroes in their reſpective ſtates, with a general ſtatement of their property, employments, and moral conduct.

The addreſs, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, was re-committed to William Walton Woolſey, William Johnſon, Samuel Coates, and Robert Patterſon, for the purpoſe of incorporating therein ſuch other matters as this Convention have reſolved to recommend to the ſaid Societies.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at ſix o'clock.

January 13th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foſter, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolſey,

Woolſey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, and James Houſton.

The Preſident being abſent, Theodore Foſter was appointed to preſide for the evening.

The committee, appointed to prepare memorials to the Legiſlatures of the ſtates of Georgia and South Carolina, preſented two eſſays, which were read; the one to the Legiſlature of Georgia, was ordered to lie on the table; that to the Legiſlature of South Carolina, after amendment, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the of the State of South Carolina.

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled, in Philadelphia, on the ſeventh day of January, 1795.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT, having been deputed, and having convened, for the purpoſe of conſidering, and carrying into effect, the moſt proper

proper meaſures for the abolition of ſlavery; and being forcibly impreſſed with a ſenſe of the dangers to which the citizens of the United States are expoſed, while a numerous claſs of men exiſt among them, deprived of their natural rights, and forcibly held in bondage;—we think it our duty to addreſs you, as men, fellow citizens, and brethren, and earneſtly to requeſt your attention to the means of avoiding the evils naturally reſulting from the above mentioned unhappy circumſtances.

The firſt ſtep which we take the liberty of ſuggeſting to you, is an entire prohibition of all traffic in ſlaves, between your ſtate and every other nation or ſtate, either by importation or exportation. This is the firſt and principal object of our memorial—an object which we the more earneſtly recommend to your attention, as we are informed that the law of your ſtate, prohibiting the importation of ſlaves, will expire ſometime in March next.

In conſidering this ſubject, many methods of conciliating the affections of this unfortunate people, and preparing them for that ſtate in ſociety upon which depends our political happineſs, ſuggeſt themſelves:—ſuch as, an amelioration of their condition and a diffuſion of knowledge among them. But, as nothing can be effectual while the number of ſlaves may be daily increaſed by importation,

tion, and while the minds of our citizens are debaſed, and their hearts hardened, by contemplating theſe people only through the medium of avarice or prejudice (a neceſſary conſequence of the traffic in man) we confine the prayer of this petition to the total prohibition of all traffic in ſlaves, between your ſtate and every other nation or ſtate, either by importation or exportation; which we reſpectfully ſolicit you to grant, having full confidence, that, independant of other conſiderations, you will ſee the evident policy of the meaſure.

The committee, appointed to conſider whether any, and what, amendments appear neceſſary in the act, paſſed by Congreſs, prohibiting the carrying on the ſlave-trade to any foreign place or country, made report as follows, *viz.*

The committee, to whom was referred the conſideration of the act of the Congreſs of the United States, for prohibiting the traffic in ſlaves, report,—

That, in their opinion, no amendment is neceſſary to the law in queſtion. It appears, to them, to prohibit the exportation of ſlaves from America, for the purpoſes of traffic, or from any part of any foreign country, whether a port, river, bay, or coaſt, to any other foreign country. The generical term "place" certainly includes as well the ſea as the

the land; and it is, in ſubſtance, declared to be unlawful ſo to traffic in any place or manner, except only what the conſtitution, at preſent, denies the power of reſtraining, *viz.* the importation of ſlaves into the United States.

Whether further experience may point out defects at preſent not ſeen, the committee cannot predict. It may not, perhaps, be prudent to aid avarice and inhumanity by the attempt.

Ordered, That the ſaid report be accepted.

On motion,

Reſolved, That this Convention addreſs the free black people, in the United States, exhorting them, by ſuitable arguments and motives, to ſuch conduct and behaviour as may be judged moſt proper to promote their own happineſs, and render them uſeful members of ſociety.

Ordered, That Samuel Coates, Robert Patterſon, and William Dunlap, be a committee to prepare, and report, an addreſs conformable to the ſaid reſolution.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at ſix o'clock.

January 14th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foſter, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Walton Woolſey, James Sloan,

Sloan, Robert Patterſon, Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, and James Houſton.

The addreſs, to the Legiſlature of the ſtate of Georgia, was read a ſecond time, and, being amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the *of the*

State of Georgia.

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled, in Philadelphia, on the ſeventh day of January, 1795.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT the Convention, aſſembled in the month of January, 1794, addreſſed your body on the ſubject of the African ſlave-trade; and the preſent Convention, not having been informed of the ſucceſs of that memorial, have thought it a duty incumbent on them, to re-call your attention to ſome points nearly connected with the honor of humanity, and the intereſt of your ſtate, and of the United States.

We have learned, with the higheſt ſatisfaction, that you have prohibited the importation of ſlaves into your ſtate, from all other

other parts of the world, except Africa. We congratulate you, and the friends of humanity in general, on ſuch a ſtep; but the time, we hope, is not far diſtant, when every motive of wiſdom and true policy will lead you to prohibit entirely this ſpecies of commerce. And we, at this time, requeſt your ſerious attention to a conſideration of the evil likely to enſue from the continuance of the traffic, and to the numerous advantages which muſt ariſe from its abolition. Among the leaſt of theſe, we would mention the conſiſtency it would afford to the American character, now held up, as an example to the European world; and the good treatment which might hence be naturally expected, as likely to be afforded to thoſe blacks who are already in your country. To theſe ſuggeſtions, permit us to add a wiſh, that you would conſider of the propriety of paſſing a law, to empower the owners of ſlaves to grant their gradual emancipation, by will or otherwiſe, as we are well convinced, that the happieſt effects are to be expected from a progreſſive abolition of ſlavery.

The committee, to whom was re-committed the addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, for the purpoſe of incorporating therein ſuch other matters as had received

the approbation of the Convention ſince the appointment of the firſt committee,—preſented one with the additions, which, being read and amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, &c.

THE Delegates, from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, convened in this city, expreſs to you, with great ſatisfaction, the pleaſure they have experienced from the punctual attendance of the perſons delegated to this Convention, and that harmony with which they have deliberated on the ſeveral matters that have been preſented to them, at this time, for their conſideration. The benefits which may flow from a continuance of this general meeting, by aiding the principal deſign of its inſtitution—the univerſal emancipation of the wretched Africans who are yet in bondage, appear to us ſo many and important, that we are induced to recommend to you, to ſend Delegates to a ſimilar Convention, which we propoſe to be holden, in this city, on the firſt day of January, in the year one thouſand, ſeven hundred and ninety-ſix.

We have thought it proper to requeſt your further attention to that part of the addreſs, of the former Convention, which relates to the procurement of certified copies of the laws

laws of your ſtate reſpecting ſlavery; and that you would ſend, to the next Convention, exact copies of all ſuch laws as are now in force, and of ſuch as have been repealed. Convinced that an hiſtorical review of the various acts and proviſions of the Legiſlatures of the ſeveral ſtates, relating to ſlavery, from the periods of their reſpective ſettlements to the preſent time, by tracing the progreſs of the ſyſtem of African ſlavery in this country, and its ſucceſſive changes in the different governments of the Union, would throw much light on the objects of our enquiry and attention, and enable us to determine, how far the cauſe of juſtice and humanity has advanced among us, and how ſoon we may reaſonably expect to ſee it triumphant;—we recommend to you, to take ſuch meaſures as you may think moſt conducive to that purpoſe, for procuring materials for the work now propoſed, and aſſiſting its publication; and to communicate, to the enſuing Convention, what progreſs you ſhall have made toward perfecting the plan here offered for your conſideration and care.

Believing that an acquaintance with the names of the officers of the ſeveral Abolition Societies, would facilitate that friendly correſpondence which ought always to be preſerved between our various aſſociations, we requeſt that you would ſend, to the next,

and

and to every future, Convention, an accurate liſt of all the officers of your Society, for the time being, with the number of members of which it conſiſts. And it would aſſiſt that Convention in aſcertaining the exiſting ſtate of ſlavery in the United States, if you were to forward to them an exact account of the perſons who have been liberated by the agency of your Society, and of thoſe who may be conſidered as ſignal inſtances of the relief that you have afforded; and, alſo, a ſtatement of the number of free blacks in your ſtate, their property, employments, and moral conduct.

As a knowledge of what has been done, and of that ſucceſs which has attended the efforts of humanity, will cheriſh the hope of benevolence, and ſtimulate to further exertion, we truſt that you will be of opinion with us, that it would be highly uſeful to procure correct reports of all ſuch trials, and deciſions of courts of judicature, reſpecting ſlavery, a knowledge of which may be ſubſervient to the cauſe of abolition, and to tranſmit them to the next, or to any future, Convention.

It cannot have eſcaped your obſervation, how many perſons there are who continue the hateful practice of enſlaving their fellow men, and who acquieſce in the ſophiſtry of the advocates of that practice, merely from want of reflection, and from an habitual

attention

attention to their own immediate intereſt. If to ſuch were often applied the force of reaſon, and the perſuaſion of eloquence, they might be awakened to a ſenſe of their injuſtice, and be ſtartled with horror at the enormity of their conduct. To produce ſo deſirable a change in ſentiment, as well as practice, we recommend to you the inſtituting of annual, or other periodical, diſcourſes, or orations, to be delivered in public, on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition.

We cannot forbear expreſſing to you our earneſt deſire, that you will continue, without ceaſing, to endeavour, by every method in your power which can promiſe any ſucceſs, to procure, either an abſolute repeal of all the laws in your ſtate, which countenance ſlavery, or ſuch an amelioration of them as will gradually produce an entire abolition. Yet, even ſhould that great end be happily attained, it cannot put a period to the neceſſity of further labor. The education of the emancipated, the nobleſt and moſt arduous taſk which we have to perform, will require all our wiſdom and virtue, and the conſtant exerciſe of the greateſt ſkill and diſcretion. When we have broken his chains, and reſtored the African to the enjoyment of his rights, the great work of juſtice and benevolence is not accompliſhed—The new born citizen muſt receive that inſtruction, and

thoſe

thoſe powerful impreſſions of moral and religious truth, which will render him capable and deſirous of fulfilling the various duties he owes to himſelf and to his country. By educating ſome in the higher branches of ſcience, and all in the uſeful parts of learning, and in the precepts of religion and morality, we ſhall not only do away the reproach and calumny ſo unjuſtly laviſhed upon us, but confound the enemies of truth, by evincing that the unhappy ſons of Africa, in ſpite of the degrading influence of ſlavery, are in no wiſe inferior to the more fortunate inhabitants of Europe and America.

As a mean of effectuating, in ſome degree, a deſign ſo virtuous and laudable, we recommend to you to appoint a committee, annually, or for any other more convenient period, to execute ſuch plans, for the improvement of the condition and moral character of the free blacks in your ſtate, as you may think beſt adapted to your particular ſituation.

By a decree of the National Convention of France, all the blacks and people of color, within the territories of the French republic, are declared free, and entitled to an equal participation of the rights of citizens of France. We have been informed that many perſons, of the above deſcription, notwithſtanding the decree in their favor, have been brought from the Weſt-India iſlands, by emigrants, into the United States, and are

now

now held as ſlaves.—We ſuggeſt to you the propriety, as well as the neceſſity, of making enquiry into the ſubject, and of effecting their liberation, ſo far as may be found conſiſtent with the laws of your ſtate.

Copies of our proceedings will be tranſmitted to you, and we hope, that you will receive ſuch ſatisfaction as will induce your early attention to the objects we have here recommended.

The committee, appointed to prepare an addreſs to the free black people, reported one, which was read, and ordered to be poſtponed for the conſideration of the next Convention.

Reſolved, That Theodore Foſter, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, and Benjamin Say, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the proceedings of this Convention; and that ſo many copies thereof as may be thought proper by the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, be printed, and diſtributed among the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

That the addreſs, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and tranſmitted, by the above mentioned committee, to the ſaid Societies.

That the Memorials, to the Legiſlatures of the ſtates of South Carolina and Georgia, be

ſigned

ſigned and atteſted as above mentioned, and tranſmitted to the reſpective Preſidents or Speakers of one branch of the Legiſlature, or laid before the reſpective Houſes, in ſuch manner as the Preſident may think expedient.

That a copy of the proceedings of this Convention be tranſmitted to the Preſident of the Abolition Society of London.

Reſolved, That the Abolition Society of Pennſylvania be requeſted to thank the Mayor of the city of Philadelphia for accommodating the Convention with a room.

The Convention then adjourned *ſine die*.

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

WALTER FRANKLIN, *Secretary*.

Philadelphia, January 14th. 1795.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE THIRD

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIX, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE SEVENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR,
NUMBER EIGHTY, CHESNUT-STREET.

1796.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE THIRD

Convention of Delegates.

AT a Convention of Deputies, from the Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1796, in the City-hall, it appeared, by the credentials produced, that the following perſons were duly appointed to repreſent their reſpective Societies in this Convention, *viz.*

Theodore Foſter, — *Providence Society.*

John Murray, junior,
Elihu Hubbard Smith,
William Johnſon,
Thomas Eddy,
William Dunlap,
Samuel Miller,
Moſes Rogers,
} *New York Society.*

Joſeph

Joſeph Bloomfield, Richard Hartſhorne, Lucius H. Stockton, Thomas Redman, Eli Elmer,	*New Jerſey Society.*
William Rawle, Benjamin Ruſh, William Rogers, Samuel Powel Griffitts, James Todd, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar,	*Pennſylvania Society.*
Frederick Craig, William Poole,	*Wilmington Society.*
Adam Fonerdon, Joſeph Townſend, John M'Kim, Henry Wilkins, George S. Johonett,	*Maryland Society.*
Robert Evans, Micajah Davis,	*Virginia Society.*

Of whom the following appeared and took their ſeats, *viz.*

Theodore Foſter,	William Rogers,
Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel P. Griffitts,
Samuel Miller,	James Todd,
Moſes Rogers,	Samuel Coates,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	William Poole,
William Rawle,	Joſeph Townſend,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Micajah Davis.

Theodore

Theodore Foſter was elected Preſident.

Thomas Pim Cope, a member of the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, was choſen Secretary, and Joſeph Fry, Door-keeper.

Communications from the ſeveral Abolition Societies, made in conſequence of the addreſs from the Convention of 1795, were preſented and read, and referred to a committee, conſiſting of Joſeph Bloomfield, Elihu Hubbard Smith, William Rogers, William Poole, Joſeph Townſend, Samuel Miller, and Micajah Davis, who were directed to report to the Convention the objects proper for its attention, and the order in which they ſhould be conſidered.

The addreſs to the free black People, poſtponed by the laſt, for the conſideration of the preſent Convention, was read and made the order of Monday next.

Adjourned.

January ſecond, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
Thomas Eddy,	William Poole,
Samuel Miller,	Joſeph Townſend,
Moſes Rogers,	Micajah Davis,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Benjamin Ruſh,
Eli Elmer,	Caſper Wiſtar,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	William Rogers.

An apology was made for the non-attendance of Richard Hartshorne in the Convention—he being detained by ſickneſs in his family.

The committee appointed to report to the Convention the objects proper for its attention, and the order in which they ſhould be conſidered, made report.

So much of the ſaid report as reſpects the addreſs to the Abolition Societies, and the memorials and addreſſes to the Legiſlatures of South Carolina and Georgia, was read by paragraph, amended and agreed to.

It was then

Reſolved, That it be referred to a committee of three to draft an addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, con-

conformably to the recommendation of the committee of arrangement: Caſpar Wiſtar, Samuel Powel Griffitts and Samuel Miller were appointed accordingly.

Samuel Coates and Thomas Eddy were appointed a committee to aſcertain what meaſures have been taken, in purſuance of the reſolutions of former Conventions, relative to the tranſmiſſion of memorials and addreſſes to the different ſtate Legiſlatures.

Adjourned.

January fourth, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
Thomas Eddy,	William Poole,
Samuel Miller,	Joſeph Townſend,
Moſes Rogers,	Henry Wilkins,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Micajah Davis,
Thomas Redman,	Caſpar Wiſtar,
William Rogers,	and
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Benjamin Ruſh.

The conſideration of the addreſs to the free Blacks was entered into—After ſome progreſs made therein, the further conſideration of it was poſtponed till to-morrow.

Adjourned.

January

January fifth, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident.

John Murray, junior,	William Poole,
Thomas Eddy,	Joſeph Townſend,
Samuel Miller,	Henry Wilkins,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Micajah Davis,
Thomas Redman,	Samuel P. Griffitts,
William Rogers,	Elihu H. Smith,
James Todd,	Moſes Rogers,
Samuel Coates,	Benjamin Ruſh,
Frederick Craig,	Caſpar Wiſtar.

The committee on the memorials and addreſſes to the different ſtate Legiſlatures, made report, which was ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the addreſs to the Abolition Societies in the United States, made report, which was ordered to lie on the table.

The Convention reſumed the conſideration of the addreſs to the free Blacks, which, after ſundry amendments, was re-committed to Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates and John Murray, junior.

The report relative to the memorials and addreſſes was taken up, conſidered by paragraph, amended, and adopted as follows:

The

The committee appointed to make enquiry reſpecting the meaſures taken in purſuance of the ſeveral reſolutions of the former Conventions, for tranſmitting memorials and addreſſes to the different State Legiſlatures; report,

That no other proceedings than thoſe that were reported laſt year, have taken place on the memorial to the Aſſembly of the State of Connecticut.

That the memorial to the Aſſembly of Rhode-iſland was received by the Abolition Society of that State, who did not think it expedient to preſent it at the time they received it.

That the memorial to the Aſſembly of New York was received, but not preſented; and, ſince that time, the Abolition Society of New York have thought it moſt proper not to preſent it; as a memorial, at their recommendation, is now prepared to be ſigned by the citizens at large; the object of which is to procure an act for the gradual abolition of ſlavery in that State.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of New-Jerſey has been preſented, and a bill for the gradual abolition of ſlavery was brought in, which was loſt by one vote.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Pennſylvania was preſented, but not acted upon. The Society was of opinion it was not neceſ-

 ſary

ſary; the objects of the memorial being either already obtained, or involved in the general proceedings of the Society.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Delaware does not appear to have been acted upon.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Maryland was ſent by the Society of Baltimore at two different times, to be laid before the Houſe; thoſe perſons who undertook to preſent it were of opinion, it was not a proper time to deliver it in, and therefore returned it to the Society again.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Virginia was not preſented—the Abolition Society in that State, judged it was beſt not to proceed with it, as they had prepared a memorial to their Aſſembly, which was ſigned by a conſiderable number of their moſt reſpectable citizens, and which contemplated the gradual abolition of ſlavery, by freeing all male children, hereafter born, at the age of twenty-one years, and females at the age of eighteen years. This memorial (which alſo embraced the amelioration of the condition of ſlaves) was read in their Houſe of Repreſentatives, where the further conſideration of it was negatived by the ſmall majority of two votes.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of North Carolina we have reaſon to believe was not preſented; but we learn that a law was paſſed about

about the end of the year 1794, or the beginning of 1795, in that ſtate, to prevent the importation of ſlaves therein either by land or water.

The two memorials in 1794 and 1795, to the Aſſemblies of South Carolina and Georgia were duly forwarded; but, we are informed, were neither of them preſented, and we cannot yet aſcertain the paſſing of any late act in either of thoſe ſtates for the relief of ſlaves.

Adjourned.

January ſixth, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	Samuel Coates,
Elihu H. Smith,	Frederick Craig,
Thomas Eddy,	William Poole,
Samuel Miller,	Joſeph Townſend,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Henry Wilkins,
Thomas Redman,	Micajah Davis,
William Rogers,	and
James Todd,	Benjamin Ruſh.

The Convention were informed, that the abſence of William Rawle was owing to indiſpoſition.

The

The committee to whom was referred the addreſs to the free Blacks, made report, which was read and adopted, as follows, *viz.*

TO THE

Free Africans and other free People of color

IN THE

UNITED STATES.

THE Convention of Deputies from the Abolition Societies in the United States, aſſembled at Philadelphia, have undertaken to addreſs you upon ſubjects highly intereſting to your proſperity.

They wiſh to ſee you act worthily of the rank you have acquired as freemen, and thereby to do credit to yourſelves, and to juſtify the friends and advocates of your color in the eyes of the world.

As the reſult of our united reflections, we have concluded to call your attention to the following articles of Advice. We truſt, they are dictated by the pureſt regard for your welfare, for we view you as Friends and Brethren.

In the firſt place, We earneſtly recommend to you, a regular attention to the important duty of public worſhip; by which means you will evince gratitude to your CREATOR, and, at the ſame time, promote knowledge, union, friendſhip, and proper conduct amongſt yourſelves.

Secondly,

Secondly, We adviſe ſuch of you, as have not been taught reading, writing, and the firſt principles of arithmetic, to acquire them as early as poſſible. Carefully attend to the inſtruction of your children in the ſame ſimple and uſeful branches of education. Cauſe them, likewiſe, early and frequently to read the holy Scriptures. They contain, among other great diſcoveries, the precious record of the original equality of mankind, and of the obligations of univerſal juſtice and benevolence, which are derived from the relation of the human race to each other in a COMMON FATHER.

Thirdly, Teach your children uſeful trades, or to labor with their hands in cultivating the earth. Theſe employments are favorable to health and virtue. In the choice of maſters, who are to inſtruct them in the above branches of buſineſs, prefer thoſe who will work with them; by this means they will acquire habits of induſtry, and be better preſerved from vice, than if they worked alone, or under the eye of perſons leſs intereſted in their welfare. In forming contracts, for yourſelves or children, with maſters, it may be uſeful to conſult ſuch perſons as are capable of giving you the beſt advice, who are known to be your friends, in order to prevent advantages being taken of your ignorance of the laws and cuſtoms of our country.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Be diligent in your reſpective callings, and faithful in all the relations you bear in ſociety, whether as huſbands, wives, fathers, children or hired ſervants. Be juſt in all your dealings. Be ſimple in your dreſs and furniture, and frugal in your family expenſes. Thus you will act like Chriſtians as well as freemen, and, by theſe means, you will provide for the diſtreſſes and wants of ſickneſs and old age.

Fifthly, Refrain from the uſe of ſpirituous liquors. The experience of many thouſands of the citizens of the United States has proved, that theſe liquors are not neceſſary to leſſen the fatigue of labor, nor to obviate the extremes of heat or cold; much leſs are they neceſſary to add to the innocent pleaſures of ſociety.

Sixthly, Avoid frolicking, and amuſements which lead to expenſe and idleneſs; they beget habits of diſſipation and vice, and thus expoſe you to deſerved reproach amongſt your white neighbours.

Seventhly, We wiſh to impreſs upon your minds the moral and religious neceſſity of having your marriages legally performed; alſo to have exact regiſters preſerved of all the births and deaths which occur in your reſpective families.

Eighthly, Endeavour to lay up as much as poſſible of your earnings for the benefit of your

your children, in caſe you ſhould die before they are able to maintain themſelves—your money will be ſafeſt and moſt beneficial when laid out in lots, houſes or ſmall farms.

Ninthly, We recommend to you, at all times and upon all occaſions, to behave yourſelves to all perſons in a civil and reſpectful manner, by which you may prevent contention and remove every juſt occaſion of complaint. We beſeech you to reflect, it is by your good conduct alone, that you can refute the objections which have been made againſt you as rational and moral creatures, and remove many of the difficulties, which have occurred in the general emancipation of ſuch of your brethren as are yet in bondage.

With hearts anxious for your welfare, we commend you to the guidance and protection of that BEING who is able to keep you from all evil, and who is the common Father and Friend of the whole family of mankind.

Reſolved, That the above addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident and atteſted by the Secretary, and that three thouſand copies thereof be printed in hand-bills, and tranſmitted to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States; to be by them diſtributed in ſuch manner as ſhall appear beſt calculated to promote its deſign.

The addreſs to the Abolition Societies was conſidered by paragraphs, amended, and recommitted

committed to the committee who made the report.

The report of the committee of arrangement was proceeded on and finally adopted, as follows:

The committee appointed to arrange the objects proper for the conſideration of the Convention, and the moſt ſuitable means of attaining the ſame, report,

That an addreſs be made, by this convention, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, recommending to them to ſend deputies to a convention ſimilar to the preſent, to be holden at Philadelphia the firſt Wedneſday of May, in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven.

Alſo, that it be recommended to thoſe ſocieties who have not ſent to this Convention, complete copies of the laws of their ſeveral States relative to ſlavery, to ſend, to the next Convention, certified copies of all ſuch laws as are now in force, have been repealed, or may be hereafter paſſed; and alſo correct liſts of the officers of each ſociety for the time being; enumeration of the members of each ſociety; accounts of the relief extended to Africans and others unlawfully held in bondage; ſtatements of their condition, whether bond or free, in reſpect to property, employment and moral conduct; reports of trials and deciſions of courts relative to Africans; conformity to

the

the recommendation of the laſt Convention to eſtabliſh periodical diſcourſes; information reſpecting the ſucceſs of all endeavors after a repeal or amelioration of the laws concerning ſlavery; and the progreſs made in extending to the Africans the benefit of education; and finally, an unremitted attention to all the great objects pointed out in the addreſs, above referred to, of the laſt Convention: And to requeſt, that whatever communications are made to the Convention from the ſeveral Societies, in conſequence of this recommendation, may be preſented in the form of regular written reports from each Society; noticing in what form and degree they have carried them into effect, and how far their efforts have been ineffectual—thus exhibiting a view of the ſtate of each Society; ſo that the ſeveral reports may be entered on the minutes of the Convention, and the Convention be thereby the better enabled to decide on the propriety of making ſuch communications public; or what part or parts of them are beſt adapted, by their publication, to advance the cauſe of truth and humanity.

And as advantages have, in numerous inſtances, reſulted from accurate regiſters being kept, by perſons appointed for that purpoſe by certain of the Abolition Societies, of manumiſſions, to recommend to all thoſe of the Abolition Societies who have not already entered into ſuch a regulation, to make it hereafter a matter of diligent attention.

And further, as difficulties have ariſen in reſpect to carrying into effect that part of the laſt circular addreſs of the Convention which relates to people of color, emigrants from the Weſt Indies, now reſiding in the United States, that the propoſed addreſs contain an extract from the twelfth article of the Conſular Convention between France and the United States, which deſignates the proper tribunals to whom application, in all ſuch caſes, is to be made; and as preciſe information, on this ſubject, cannot be too generally diffuſed, that the Pennſylvania Society be requeſted to collect all poſſible information relative to ſuch emigrants of color, in this country, as are made citizens of the French republic, by the decree of the National Convention of the ſixteenth Pluvioſe of the ſecond year of the republic, and to tranſmit the ſame to the ſeveral Societies.

And that it be impreſſed upon all the Societies, to uſe every juſt means in their power which may advance, either directly or indirectly, the great cauſe of liberty; and that, as one mean of promoting its intereſts, they be earneſtly ſolicited to diſplay a marked preference of all ſuch commodities as are of the culture or manufacture of freemen, to thoſe which are cultivated or manufactured by ſlaves.

That inquiry be made concerning the meaſures taken, in purſuance of the reſolution

of

of the Convention of 1795, for tranſmitting memorials to the Legiſlatures of the States of South Carolina and Georgia.

In addition to the preceding report, the committee have thought proper to lay before the Convention, a ſummary of the information which has been forwarded by the ſeveral Societies, in conformity to the recommendation of former Conventions, which is as follows, *viz.*

The *Connecticut Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society, and copies of the ſtatutes of Connecticut concerning ſlavery and the ſlave trade.

The *New-York Society* have tranſmitted copies of their conſtitution, of the exiſting laws of their State relative to ſlaves and ſlavery; a correct liſt of their officers for the time being, and a ſtatement of the number of their members; a brief account of the origin and progreſs of the Society, together with a general eſtimate of the relief extended to Africans and the deſcendants of Africans; a ſhort hiſtory of their inſtitution for the education of African deſcendants; and the additional information, that they have inſtituted an annual oration on ſubjects relative to the object of their aſſociation; that they are preparing, to be tranſmitted to ſome future Convention, reports of ſeveral caſes adjudged in the courts of judicature of the State of New-York; that a plan has been propoſed

poſed (in conformity to the recommendation of the laſt Convention) for educating a certain number of black children, liberally; and that they have now in readineſs, to be preſented to the Legiſlature of that State at their next ſeſſion, a petition for the gradual abolition of ſlavery in that State; of the ſucceſs of which they indulge the moſt flattering expectations.

The *New-Jerſey Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society, the laws of New-Jerſey concerning negroe and mulatto ſlaves now in force, and ſuch as have been repealed, and a certified copy of the deciſions of the Supreme Court of New-Jerſey reſpecting ſlavery; a liſt of the officers of the Society, with the number of members of which it conſiſts and the minutes of the Society for the year 1795.

The *Pennſylvania Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society and the act of the incorporation of the ſame; copies of ſuch laws reſpecting ſlavery as are now in force, with extracts and titles of the laws which have been repealed; a liſt of the officers and number of the members, cloſing with the year 1795; a plan for improving the condition of the free blacks; caſes of the liberation of two French negroes under the decree of the ſixteenth of Pluvioſe, ſecond year of the republic; ſpecimens of penmanſhip of the black children in one of the ſchools of Philadelphia; an account of the number

of

of free blacks in the city and liberties of Philadelphia, whereby it appears, that there are three hundred and eighty-one families, conſiſting of one thouſand two hundred and ninety-four perſons of that deſcription, included in which number are the proprietors of ninety-nine houſes, the average worth of which houſes are ſuppoſed to be two hundred dollars each, held chiefly on ground-rent, and, for that cauſe, valued low—the greater number of theſe free blacks conduct themſelves with reputation and enjoy the comforts ariſing from induſtry. In addition to the above-deſcribed black people, there are many others who are employed as domeſtic ſervants in the families of the whites, whoſe numbers are not aſcertained. The blacks have two places of worſhip of their own in the city of Philadelphia, and there are alſo ſeveral free ſchools for their particular uſe—ſome of which are ſupported by the Pennſylvania Abolition Society.

The *Wilmington Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society; a liſt of perſons liberated by their agency; a liſt of their officers with the number of members; and information, that the Society propoſe to petition the Legiſlature of Delaware, at their next ſeſſion, for an act for the gradual abolition of ſlavery.

The *Maryland Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society; liſt of officers and number of members; number of perſons liberated

liberated through their agency; information that the Society propoſe to make application to the Legiſlature for the amelioration of the ſituation of the blacks, and for a gradual abolition of ſlavery; that annual orations have been delivered; good diſpoſition of the blacks diſcovered to attend places of religious worſhip; and the inſtitution of an academy for their inſtruction in literature, under the particular patronage of the Society.

The *Virginia Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society; liſt of officers and number of members, with information, that an application to the Legiſlature of Virginia, for the gradual abolition of ſlavery, has been rejected by a very ſmall majority.

Adjourned.

January ſeventh, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
Thomas Eddy,	Frederick Craig,
Samuel Miller,	William Poole,
Moſes Rogers,	Joſeph Townſend,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Henry Wilkins,
Thomas Redman,	Micajah Davis,
William Rogers,	and
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Benjamin Ruſh.

The

The committee to whom was referred the addreſs to the different Abolition Societies made report, which was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States inform you, that, agreeably to the recommendation of the Convention of laſt year, they met in this city on the firſt inſtant, and have, with much harmony and ſatisfaction, gone through the buſineſs which came before them. They have the pleaſure to aſſure you, that every ſucceſſive meeting evinces the importance of that union and concert which are ſo happily eſtabliſhed among the ſeveral Societies, in purſuing the great object of their aſſociation.

But, although the exertions of this delegated Body have been hitherto attended, as we hope, with conſiderable ſucceſs—Although we are perſuaded that no ſmall progreſs may be marked in the great buſineſs of emancipation; yet much remains to be done; as long as *ſeven hundred thouſand* of our Fellow Creatures, in the United States, continue in a ſtate of bondage, there appears a preſſing neceſſity for the continuance of our efforts; that we ſhould keep our attention fixed upon the ſubject, and ſtand ready to improve every favorable opportunity that may

may occur, to forward the intereſting cauſe in which we are engaged. We are therefore induced to continue the recommendation heretofore made, that a ſimilar meeting be annually held; and as convening at the preſent ſeaſon is attended with inconveniences, we propoſe, that the next Convention, ſhould aſſemble in this city, on the firſt Wedneſday of May, in the year 1797.

It gave us pleaſure to learn, from various reports which were laid before us, that moſt of the recommendations made by the former Conventions, had received a conſiderable degree of attention, from the ſeveral ſocieties to whom they were addreſſed. But, as they have not been uniformly and perfectly complied with, permit us to repeat the requeſt, *ſo far as the ſame may be applicable to your ſociety*, that you tranſmit to the next Convention, certified copies of all ſuch laws, in any wiſe reſpecting ſlavery, as are now in force, as have been repealed, or may hereafter be enacted—Correct liſts of the officers of your ſociety, for the time being, and alſo the names of all your members, and their places of abode—An account of the proceedings of your ſociety, in relieving Africans and others unlawfully held in bondage—A ſtatement of the condition of the blacks, both bond and free, in your ſtate, with reſpect to the property of the free, and the employment and moral conduct of all—Re-

ports

ports of ſuch trials and deciſions of the Courts of Judicature, relative to Africans, as may have taken place—An account of the endeavors which have been uſed to obtain a repeal or amelioration of the laws reſpecting ſlavery —Information concerning what has been done, in purſuance of the recommendation of the laſt Convention, to eſtabliſh periodical diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition—And finally, a report of the progreſs you have made in extending to Africans the benefits of education. And we further requeſt, that whatever communications may be made to the next, or to any future Convention, in conſequence of the above recommendations, be preſented in the form of regular written reports, noticing in what manner and degree you have carried them into effect, and how far your efforts have been ineffectual. By this mean there will be exhibited ſuch a view of the ſtate of each Society, as that the ſeveral reports may be entered on the minutes of the Convention, who will thereby be better enabled to decide on the propriety of making public ſuch parts of theſe communications as may be beſt adapted to advance the cauſe of truth and humanity.

And as very important advantages have, in ſeveral inſtances, reſulted from accurate regiſters being kept, by perſons appointed for that purpoſe by certain of the Abolition So-

cieties in the United States, of ſuch manumiſſions as have taken place; we do earneſtly recommend, ſhould you not already have entered into this regulation, that you make it hereafter an object of diligent attention. Such records may, in various ways, ſubſerve the cauſe of emancipation.

We learn, that the propoſal made by the laſt Convention, reſpecting the blacks and people of color, who have emigrated from the Weſt Indies, and now reſide in the United States, has, in many inſtances, given riſe to difficulty; in order to remove which, we have been induced to tranſmit to you the following extract from the twelfth article of the Conſular Convention between France and the United States; which, by deſignating the proper tribunals to whom application, in ſuch caſes, is to be made, will, we truſt, be found ſufficient, in future, to direct your proceedings in this buſineſs, *viz.*

" That all differences and ſuits between " French citizens in the United States, and " between American citizens in the domi- " nions of France, ſhall be determined by " the reſpective Conſuls and Vice Conſuls, " either by a reference to arbitrators, or by " a ſummary judgment, and without coſts; " and that no officer of the country, civil " or military, ſhall interfere therein, or take " any part whatever in the matter."

When

* When we contemplate the odious nature and the immenſe magnitude of the evil which you have aſſociated to oppoſe, and the ineſtimable importance of the objects which you are ſeeking to obtain, we cannot forbear to urge unremitted exertions, in purſuing the great ends before you. We are perſuaded you will not neglect any juſt means in your power, which may tend to advance, either directly, or indirectly, the cauſe of equal liberty;—And it gives us pleaſure alſo to expreſs our perſuaſion, that, in this purſuit, much is ſtill in your power. Although you cannot controul Legiſlatures; and though, when you plead the cauſe of humanity, they will not, at all times, liſten to you; yet there are other means to be uſed, perhaps, more effectual—You can do much, by directing your efforts to the conviction of individuals—by diffuſing proper publications amongſt them, and by preſenting the evils of ſlavery in various forms to their minds.

Nor

* *The following was inſerted in the Addreſs to the Pennſylvania Abolition Society:*

And as preciſe information, on this ſubject, cannot be too generally diffuſed, we requeſt you to collect all poſſible intelligence relative to ſuch blacks and people of color in the United States as are made Citizens of the French Republic, by the decree of the National Convention, of the ſixteenth Pluvioſe, ſecond year of the republic, and tranſmit the ſame to all the other Abolition Societies in the United States.

Nor can we ſuppoſe, it would be an effort altogether ineffectual in favor of liberty, were its friends, throughout the United States, in all caſes where it is practicable, to diſplay a marked preference of ſuch commodities, as are of the culture or manufacture of freemen, to thoſe which are cultivated or manufactured by ſlaves—In this way, every individual may diſcountenance oppreſſion, and bear teſtimony againſt a practice, which is ſtill ſuffered to remain the diſgrace of our land.

We have thought proper to addreſs the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, on various ſubjects, which we believe nearly to concern their intereſt and happineſs. We have directed copies of this addreſs to be tranſmitted to you, and requeſt you to diſtribute the ſame, in your State, in ſuch manner as you may judge beſt calculated to promote its deſign.

We cannot conclude, without calling your attention, in a particular manner, to the neceſſity of appointing ſuch of your members to repreſent you in the Convention, as will be punctually attentive to the duties of their appointment. We are ſorry to obſerve, that there is ſome ground of complaint on this ſubject; but we truſt, that, in future, ſuch a full repreſentation will appear, as will give encreaſing encouragement, energy and ſucceſs to our united endeavors, in the great cauſe of human happineſs.

Copies

Copies of our proceedings will be laid before you; from which, we hope, you will derive ſatisfaction, and perceive the importance of the ſeveral objects which we have recommended to your attention.

The Delegates from the Pennſylvania Society, communicated the following extract of a letter to that Society, from Samuel Hoare, junior, Treaſurer to the committee of the London Society, inſtituted for the purpoſe of effecting the abolition of the ſlave trade:

" Since the commencement of our correſ-
" pondence, we have never addreſſed you
" under circumſtances of greater diſcourage-
" ment, as to the attainment of the object
" of our inſtitution, than at preſent—The
" arts and ſophiſtry of intereſted men, have
" even proved ſufficient to induce the Houſe
" of Commons to deſert a duty, the incum-
" bency of which, after a long inveſtigation,
" it had ſolemnly acknowledged—And we
" have to lament the failure of thoſe exer-
" tions, which, aiming at a temporary abo-
" lition of the ſlave trade, were calculated
" to avert the calamities we had anticipated
" as the inevitable conſequences of its con-
" tinuance.

" At our laſt meeting, your letter of the
" third of March, was laid before us, and
" afforded a ſatisfaction which ſuch proofs of

" your

" your benevolent perſeverance have never
" failed to impart—We beg you will be aſ-
" ſured of the intereſt we continue to feel
" in the ſucceſs of your endeavors, and of
" the pleaſure with which we conſider their
" increaſing impreſſion on the minds of your
" Fellow Citizens—The eſtabliſhment of
" ſimilar Societies in other and remote parts,
" and of a Convention intended to concen-
" trate your influence, we regard as happy
" preſages that the day is not far diſtant,
" when the virtue and vigour of your riſing
" Empire, will be manifeſted in the total
" extinction of perſonal as well as political
" ſlavery, in the United States.

" We duly received the copies ſent to us
" of the minutes of the laſt Convention; and
" we deſire, through you, to preſent our
" thanks for this acceptable mark of its atten-
" tion, with a copy of our late report."

Which, with the printed report of the committee therein referred to, was now read.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That this Convention, whilſt they regret the want of ſucceſs which has attended the efforts of the friends of the abolition of ſlavery in Great Britain, receive with ſatisfaction the congratulations of the London committee, on the progreſs made towards the extinction of ſlavery in the United States; and that the Preſident tranſmit a copy of the proceedings

ceedings of the Convention, to the committee of the London Society, with a letter expreſſive of the feelings of the Convention on this occaſion.

Reſolved, That Theodore Foſter, Samuel Coates and Samuel Powel Griffitts be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the proceedings of the Convention; and that fifteen hundred copies be printed and diſtributed amongſt the different Abolition Societies in the United States.

Reſolved, That the addreſs to the ſeveral Societies be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and forwarded to the Societies by the committee above mentioned: and that the ſame committee be further directed to tranſmit to the ſeveral Societies, the printed copies of the addreſs to the free blacks, in ſuch proportion as ſhall to them appear proper.

Reſolved, That James Todd, Samuel Powel Griffitts and Samuel Coates be a committee to notify all the Abolition Societies in the United States, of the meeting of the next Convention, at leaſt three months before ſuch meeting is convened: and to have the proceedings of this and the former Conventions tranſcribed, and, with the papers, depoſited in the care of the Preſident of the Pennſylvania Society.

Reſolved,

Resolved, That William Rogers and James Todd be a committee to communicate to the Mayor and Corporation of the City of Philadelphia, the thanks of this Convention, for the use of their room.

Adjourned, *sine die.*

Published by order of the Convention,

THOMAS P. COPE, *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, January 7th. 1796.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FOURTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE THIRD DAY OF MAY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVEN, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE NINTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

757.6.2

Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR, NUMBER EIGHTY, CHESNUT-STREET.

1797.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FOURTH

Convention of Delegates.

May third, 1797.

REPRESENTATIVES from ſeveral of the Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in various parts of the United States, having aſſembled in the Senate Chamber at Philadelphia, on the third of May, 1797; it appeared, by credentials produced, that the following perſons were appointed Delegates to this Convention:

Willett Seaman,
Thomas Eddy,
Samuel L. Mitchill,
William Dunlap,
Elihu Hubbard Smith,
} *From New-York.*

Joſeph

Joſeph Bloomfield, Richard Hartshorne, Joſeph Sloan, William Cox, junior, William Carpenter,	*From New-Jerſey.*
Benjamin Ruſh, William Rawle, Samuel Powel Griffitts, Caſpar Wiſtar, Samuel Coates, Robert Patterſon, James Todd,	*From Pennſylvania.*
Seth Hill Evitts, - -	*From Choptank.*
Francis Johonnett, Jeſſe Tyſon, Gerrard T. Hopkins,	*From Baltimore.*
Joſeph Anthony, - -	*From Richmond.*
George Drinker, - -	*From Alexandria.*

Of whom the following attended and took their ſeats:

William Dunlap,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Seth Hill Evitts,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Richard Hartshorne,	Francis Johonnett,
Joſeph Sloan,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Joſeph Anthony,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	George Drinker,
William Cox, junior,	and
Samuel Coates,	Robert Patterſon.

Joſeph Bloomfield was elected Preſident.

Thomas

Thomas P. Cope was appointed Secretary, and Jacob Meyer, Door-keeper.

Communications from New-York, Pennſylvania, Choptank, Maryland and Alexandria Abolition Societies were preſented and read.

Adjourned till ten o'clock A. M. to-morrow.

May fourth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

William Dunlap,	Seth Hill Evitts,
Elihu H. Smith,	Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorne,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Joſeph Sloan,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
William Cox, junior,	George Drinker,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Joſeph Anthony,
Samuel Coates,	James Todd,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	Robert Patterſon.

Communications from the New-Jerſey and Virginia ſocieties were produced and read.

It was, on motion,

Reſolved, That Elihu H. Smith, Richard Hartshorne, Robert Patterſon, Seth Hill Evitts, Francis Johonnett, George Drinker and Joſeph Anthony be a committee to take into conſideration the reports from the different Abolition Societies, and to report to the Convention the meaſures neceſſary to be taken

in

in conſequence of thoſe communications, as well as the objects proper for the attention of the Convention.

Samuel P. Griffitts ſtated, that the members appointed by the laſt Convention to notify the Abolition Societies of the meeting of this Convention, to have the proceedings of the former Conventions tranſcribed, and, with the papers, depoſited in the care of the Preſident of the Pennſylvania Society, had fully performed the ſervice aſſigned them.

Adjourned till three o'clock P. M. to-morrow.

May fifth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Elihu H. Smith,	Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorne,	Samuel Coates,
Joſeph Sloan,	James Todd,
William Cox, junior,	Seth H. Evitts,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Robert Patterſon,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
William Dunlap,	George Drinker,
Samuel L. Mitchill,	Joſeph Anthony.

The committee appointed at the laſt meeting to take into conſideration the reports from the different Abolition Societies, and to report to the Convention the meaſures neceſſary to be

be taken in conſequence of thoſe communications, as well as the objects proper for the attention of the Convention, made the following report, which was read and conſidered by paragraphs.

The committee to whom were referred the ſeveral communications made to the Convention, and who were directed to conſider what objects are proper for the attention of the Convention, and the moſt ſuitable means for their attainment, report,

I. That they have carefully attended to the communications, from the ſeveral Societies, made to the Convention for the paſt and preſent years, and compared them with the recommendations and requiſitions of the Convention of 1796. By the annexed table, the Convention will perceive what theſe requiſitions and recommendations were, and how far each ſociety has complied therewith.

II. The committee recommend it to the Convention, to addreſs a letter or memorial to the Secretary of State of the United States, recapitulating the evidence which the records of the Diſtrict Court of the United States, for the Pennſylvania Diſtrict afford, of attempts made by citizens of the United States, to evade the law prohibiting our citizens from ſupplying foreign countries with ſlaves, by clandeſtinely uſing the Daniſh flag and regiſters, and praying ſuch aid and interference of the government of the United States, with the court of Denmark, or with other governments

under

under whoſe authority ſuch practices now obtain, as may conſiſt with propriety, for the prevention of the uſe of their flag or regiſters, by the citizens of the United States, under any pretence whatever, for the purpoſe of purſuing the trade in men.

III. It appearing from the report of the Alexandria Society, that the law of the United States, entitled, "An act to prohibit the carrying on the ſlave-trade from the United States to any foreign place or country," is defective, in that it does not prevent the ſhipment of ſlaves (for ſale in the Weſt Indies and elſewhere) on board veſſels, not ſpecially fitted out for that purpoſe—the act being thereby evaded.

The committee recommend it to the Convention, to preſent a memorial or petition to Congreſs, praying ſuch an amendment of the act above referred to, as may oblige the maſter or owner of any veſſel or veſſels before clearing out, to declare on oath or affirmation, that no ſlaves are received or taken on board ſaid veſſel or veſſels, for ſale in any foreign port; and as may further oblige him to enter into a recognizance or bond, with a ſufficient penalty to be put in ſuit, and the penalty recovered, in caſe a ſale of any ſlave ſo put on board ſhould take place.

IV. It appears from the papers from North Carolina, that, by a law of that ſtate, paſſed in 1777, certain negroes and others, who had been previouſly emancipated by their proprietors

prietors, citizens of that ſtate, were taken up, and again reduced to ſlavery; and this, not only where the perſons ſo emancipated had continued in the ſtate, but alſo where the emancipation had been effected in other ſtates, and the freed-man had returned into North Carolina, to reſide there: in both caſes, in direct violation of the conſtitution of the ſtate. But the committee would recommend it to the Convention to obtain the opinion of the moſt eminent counſel in this city, whether an action for damages, by a perſon emancipated in another ſtate before the paſſing of the act in 1777, and who was again reduced to ſlavery on returning to North Carolina, could not be maintained againſt the purchaſer or holder of ſuch perſon in the Courts of the United States; or whether any, and what legal remedy may be had for perſons under theſe circumſtances, and where they were made ſlaves, without having quitted the ſtate.

V. The committee are further of opinion, that much advantage would reſult from annexing ſhort and comprehenſive abſtracts of the laws now in force in the ſeveral ſtates, relative to Africans and other people of color, (ſo far as may be practicable at this time) to the printed minutes of this Convention, for the information of the ſeveral Societies, and recommend it accordingly.

VI. The benefits which ſeem to have reſulted from the addreſs made to the free blacks in the United States by the Convention of

1796, in the judgment of the committee, indicate the propriety of a ſimilar addreſs the preſent year, reiterating the moſt important articles of advice contained in the former, and acquainting them with the general good effects which it has produced.

VII. The great object of the ſeveral Conventions in collecting the various information which they have ſolicited from the Societies, being to obtain materials for the compoſition, at ſome future time of a general hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States, it ſeems neceſſary to uſe means for procuring the proper documents from thoſe ſtates wherein no Abolition Societies now exiſt; it is the opinion of the committee, that the Convention ſhould, therefore, procure the aſſiſtance of ſuitable perſons in thoſe ſtates wherein no Societies for promoting the abolition of ſlavery are inſtituted, by whoſe means authentic copies of all laws paſſed therein ſince the ſettlement of the country may be obtained.

VIII. The committee recommend it to the Convention, to ſend letters to the Societies in London and Paris, communicating general information concerning the progreſs of emancipation in the United States ſince the laſt Convention; and accompanied by copies of the printed minutes of this Convention. The committee alſo ſuggeſt the propriety of writing to the Governor and Council at Sierra Leone, requeſting ſuch minute and legal evidence as they can afford, which may in any

wiſe

wiſe tend to diſcover and bring to condemnation thoſe citizens of the United States, who, contrary to the laws of their country, purſue the traffic in ſlaves.

IX. Laſtly—Your committee deem it proper and neceſſary, that a circular addreſs be ſent to the ſeveral Societies within the United States, requeſting them, generally, to ſend Delegates to a Convention to be held in the city of Philadelphia on the firſt Wedneſday of June, 1798, and particularly inculcating this meaſure on thoſe Societies who are unrepreſented in the preſent Convention:—that this addreſs enjoin upon the Societies, a continued attention to the ſeveral requiſitions of former Conventions as far as may apply to each, and referring them for information to the table accompanying this report, which the committee think proper to be annexed to the printed minutes of this Convention: that the ſpecial attention of ſuch Societies as have hitherto either partially or not at all acted in this matter, be called by the addreſs to the inſtruction of the people of color within their limits:—and that it ſolicit every kind of information from the Societies, which may, in any wiſe, illuſtrate the hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States; finally, that it recommend to Societies exiſting in the ſame ſtate, that they form a general plan of union or confederation, ſo as on all important occaſions, to act in concert.

The

The firſt ſection having been agreed to and the ſecond poſtponed, it was, on motion,

Reſolved, That the third be referred to a committee, conſiſting of James Todd and George Drinker, who are authorized to take the opinion of legal counſel on the ſubject, and if ſuch counſel prove favorable to the purpoſe of the recommendation therein contained, to prepare and report a memorial accordingly—The fourth ſection was alſo referred to the ſame committee.

The fifth ſection was committed to William Dunlap, Joſeph Sloan, Robert Patterſon and Jeſſe Tyſon, who are to collect and arrange the abſtracts therein mentioned.

Benjamin Ruſh and Samuel Coates were appointed a committee to prepare an addreſs agreeably to the recommendation contained in the ſixth ſection.

The following reſoluion was adopted reſpecting the ſeventh ſection, *viz.*

Reſolved, That it be recommended to the Pennſylvania Society, to carry into effect that part of the recommendation which relates to the ſtates ſouthward of New-York; and to the New-York Society, to carry into effect ſuch part as regards the ſtates to the northward of New-York.

The eighth ſection was referred to Samuel L. Mitchill, William Cox, junior, and Caſpar Wiſtar, who are to prepare drafts of addreſſes conformably thereto.

Samuel

Samuel P. Griffitts, Caſpar Wiſtar, Richard Hartshorne and Joſeph Anthony were appointed a committee to report an addreſs as propoſed in the ninth ſection.

The ſecond ſection was then taken up, and Samuel P. Griffitts and Samuel Coates appointed a committee to report thereon.

Seth Hill Evitts, obtained leave of abſence on account of ſickneſs in his family.

The Convention adjourned till three o'clock on Monday afternoon.

May eighth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
William Dunlap,	Robert Patterſon,
Richard Hartshorne,	James Todd,
Joſeph Sloan,	Francis Johonnett,
Bejamin Ruſh,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	George Drinker,
Samuel L. Mitchill,	Joſeph Anthony.

The committee, on the third and fourth ſections of the report of the committee to whom were referred the ſeveral communications made to the Convention, made report which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The

The committee on the ſixth ſection, reported an addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the eighth ſection reported eſſays of the letters directed to be written, which were read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the ſecond ſection made report, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the ninth ſection made report, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the fifth ſection reported a number of abſtracts of laws reſpecting ſlavery, which were

Ordered to lie on the table.

The report of the committee on the third and fourth ſections, was then taken up, and, with the opinion of counſel on the ſubject, read a ſecond time.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That a committee of two be appointed to draft and report a letter to the Secretary of the treaſury of the United States, reciting the information which the Convention have received concerning the manner of evading the law of the United States prohibiting the ſupplying foreign nations with

ſlaves,

ſlaves, and requeſting him to addreſs particular inſtructions to the ſeveral collectors ſo as to prevent ſuch evaſion. Elihu H. Smith and James Todd, were appointed a committee for carrying this reſolution into effect.

The addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, was called up and after conſideration re-committed.

The letter propoſed to be ſent to the committee of the London ſociety, inſtituted for the purpoſe of effecting the abolition of the ſlave trade, as reported by the committee on the eighth ſection, was then read; and after amendment agreed to, and the Secretary was requeſted to have a fair copy of it prepared for the ſignature of the Preſident.

The letter to the ſociety of the friends of the blacks at Paris, as reported by the ſame committee, was read, and after amendment re-committed.

The committee appointed to draft and report a letter to the Secretary of the treaſury, reported one, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The Convention then entered into a conſideration of the addreſs to the Governor and Council of the Sierra Leone ſettlement, which was agreed to.

Adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

May

May ninth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Samuel L. Mitchill,
William Dunlap,
Elihu H. Smith,
Richard Hartſhorn,
Joſeph Sloan,
Samuel P. Griffitts,
Robert Patterſon,
Caſpar Wiſtar,
Samuel Coates,
James Todd,
Francis Johonnett,
Jeſſe Tyſon,
Gerrard T. Hopkins,
George Drinker,
Joſeph Anthony.

The committee to whom was re-committed the addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, made report, which was read, conſidered by paragraphs, and finally agreed to as follows:

TO THE

Free Africans and other free People of color

IN THE

UNITED STATES.

THE Convention of Delegates from the Abolition Societies in the United States, having again aſſembled for the purpoſe of promoting your happineſs, conſider it their duty, once more to call your attention to the advice which was addreſſed to you by the Convention of laſt year; and which we ſubjoin to the preſent addreſs, in order that you may at one view be able to profit by theſe collected advices of your ſincereſt friends. The oftner we re-

view

view that advice, the more we are impreſſed with its importance, and the more anxious we are to urge your ſtrict and faithful obſervance of it. We ſhall only add thereto, at preſent, one other requeſt, and that is, that you would avoid gaming in all its varied forms—the ruinous and miſerable conſequences of this moſt pernicious evil, are ſo notorious, and ſo generally acknowledged, that we cannot too forcibly endeavour to guard you againſt it. It ſubjects you to the controul of the moſt degrading paſſions, and too generally leads to the loſs of fortune, reputation, and of every good principle.

We can with peculiar ſatisfaction inform you, that ſchools and places of worſhip have been eſtabliſhed, and that they are well attended by people of your color, in New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland, Virginia and other places; and we are happy to find, that many of you have evinced, by your prudent and moral conduct, that you are not unworthy of the freedom you enjoy.

Go on in theſe paths of virtue:—By perſevering in them you will juſtify the ſolicitude and labors of your friends in your behalf, and furniſh an additional argument for the emancipation of ſuch of your brethren as are yet in bondage in the United States and in other parts of the world.

Whereupon,

Reſolved,

Reſolved, That the ſaid addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and that three thouſand copies thereof together with a like number of the former addreſs to the ſame people, be printed in the form of hand bills, to be diſtributed by the different Abolition Societies, in ſuch way as may to them appear the moſt proper.

The committee to whom was re-committed the letter to the ſociety of the friends of the blacks of Paris brought in their report, which was conſidered by paragraphs, amended and finally agreed to.

The letter to the Secretary of the treaſury was read a ſecond time and adopted as follows:

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia,

Reſpectfully repreſent,

That it appears, by information received by us, that the act of Congreſs, paſſed March twenty-ſecond, 1794, prohibiting our citizens from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves, is evaded in certain parts of the union, by the ſhipment of one, two, or a few ſlaves for ſale in a foreign port, on board of veſſels not ſpecially fitted out for carrying on the ſlave trade. The Convention have taken the opinion of counſel on the ſubject, and are aſſured, that ſuch ſhipments are equally a breach of law with thoſe made on board of veſſels originally deſtined to this traffic; this

aſſurance,

aſſurance, derived from reſpectable authority, encourages us to make application to you, as the proper officer of the government of the United States, to exert the powers with which you are inveſted, for the prevention of the offences of which we complain. Hitherto they have been committed with impunity, from a perſuaſion, on the part of the collectors of certain ports, that the prohibitions of the law did not extend to the caſes referred to. But if, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Treaſury, the exiſting law of Congreſs is deſigned to include theſe caſes in its reſtrictions of the commerce in men, we feel a firm conviction that he will not refuſe his friendly interference in its ſupport, on the preſent occaſion; but will readily conſent to forward ſuch inſtructions to the proper officers, as ſhall prevent all future doubt in reſpect to the meaning of the law, and all future connivance at its violation. The difficulty of bringing to juſtice thoſe who are concerned in evading the proviſions of the law in queſtion, in thoſe parts of the union where they are moſt common, renders it neceſſary that great care ſhould be taken to remove every poſſible pretext for acting in oppoſition to its true intent. The force of this remark, we have no doubt, will be fully comprehended by the Secretary of the Treaſury, and juſtify the propriety of this addreſs.

The

The letter to the Secretary of State of the United States, was read a ſecond time and adopted in the following words:

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia,

Reſpectfully repreſent,

That the recent condemnation of two veſſels engaged in a commerce contrary to the act of Congreſs of March twenty-ſecond, 1794, which prohibits the citizens of theſe ſtates from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves, has furniſhed us with ſufficient evidence to prove that the Daniſh flag and regiſters have been made uſe of to cover theſe clandeſtine undertakings. Under theſe circumſtances we feel ourſelves impelled by the powerful motives of humanity and duty to our country, to forward the encloſed evidence, duly given to the Diſtrict Court of Pennſylvania, and to requeſt ſuch aid and interference of the Executive of the United States with the Court of Denmark and other foreign powers, under whoſe authority ſuch practices now obtain, or may hereafter be attempted, as may be conſiſtent with propriety, to prevent the uſe of their flag and regiſters by citizens of the United States under any pretence whatever for the purpoſe of carrying on the commerce in men.

The following authenticated decree of the National Convention of France, was preſented by one of the delegates of Pennſylvania:

DECREE,

DECREE,

Which declares, that the ſlavery of the negroes is aboliſhed in all the colonies, and refers it to the committee of Public Safety to be put into form, and to report what meaſures are to be taken to carry it into effect.

Sixteenth Pluvios, ſecond year.

The National Convention declares, that the ſlavery of the negroes is aboliſhed in all the colonies: and therefore decrees, that all men, without diſtinction of color, who reſide in the colonies, are French citizens, and ſhall enjoy all thoſe rights ſecured to them by the Conſtitution.

Referred to the committee of public ſafety to report, forthwith, on the meaſures to be taken to carry this decree into effect.

(True copy.)

SONTHONAX,
RAIMOND.

Members of the Commiſſion, delegated by the French government to St. Domingo.

PASCAL, *Secretary General.**

* Extract from the twelfth article of the Conſular Convention, between France and the United States:

"All differences and ſuits between French citizens in the United States and between American citizens in the dominions of France, ſhall be determined by the reſpective Conſuls and Vice Conſuls, either by a reference to arbitrators, or by a ſummary judgment and without coſts—and no officer of the country, civil or military, ſhall interfere therein, or take any part whatever in the matter."

Whereupon,

Whereupon, On motion,

Reſolved, That there be ſent with the circular addreſs to each of the different Abolition Societies a copy thereof, certified by the proper officer in the United States.

The addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, was read a ſecond time by paragraphs, and adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

To inform you of our proceedings; to ſolicit your further advice and aſſiſtance; and to requeſt your ſpecial attention to the original object of our meetings, we now addreſs you.

We have, as formerly, gone through our buſineſs with harmony and ſatisfaction; the peculiar objects thereof will appear from our minutes, herewith tranſmitted; and we can truly add, that the important advantages evidently ariſing from ſuch a collection of information and exchange of ſentiment are too obvious, not to unite us in the recommendation, that a ſimilar Convention of delegates from the different abolition ſocieties, be held in this city on the firſt day of June, 1798.

The non-compliance of ſeveral ſocieties with this propoſal for ſome years paſt, induces us to believe that ſome obſtacles may exiſt, which poſſibly might be removed; we therefore requeſt, that where it is not agreed to ſend delegates, ſuch ſocieties would favor the Convention, in writing, with their determination

nation and the cauſes of it. This will better enable the Convention to judge of the moſt proper mode of proceeding in future.

A table, containing the requiſitions of this and the former Conventions, and how far they have hitherto been complied with by each ſociety, will ſhew the propriety and and neceſſity of fulfilling theſe requiſitions; which, after being thus pointed out need not now be further inſiſted on.

When we conſider the extenſive influence of education on ſociety, we think a due attention to the inſtruction of the blacks and people of color of every deſcription cannot be too forcibly impreſſed. This will apply not merely to what is called ſchool learning, but eſſentially conſiſts in inculcating the ſound principles of morality and religion as well as habits of temperance and induſtry. From a continued regard to the welfare of this much injured and much oppreſſed people, we have again addreſſed them on ſuch points as we judged would be moſt beneficial; but it will in a great degree reſt with you to circulate and enforce the advice recommended: and we may add, that, as the evils which muſt neceſſarily reſult from their being retained in a ſtate of ignorance are incalculable, ſo it is, in our opinion, the greateſt and perhaps the only important ſervice we can render to them and to our country, to diſſeminate learning and morality amongſt them, thus raiſing them gradually and ſafely to that level, to which they muſt, in the courſe of time, inevitably attain.

The different Conventions have from year to year, endeavoured to procure from the Abolition Societies, every kind of information which may illuſtrate the hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States; we now repeat their requeſt, with a view to the formation of a hiſtory of this important ſubject.

From the general accounts received, as well as from our own obſervations, we are induced ſtrongly to recommend, that where ſeveral Abolition Societies exiſt in one ſtate, they would, if poſſible, form a general plan of union or confederation, ſo as, on all important occaſions, to act in concert.

You are already well informed of the act of Congreſs of March twenty-ſecond, 1794, prohibiting the citizens of the United States from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves; you will alſo moſt probably have heard that this wiſe and humane law has been too frequently violated by our citizens; in conſequence of which the Abolition Societies of Pennſylvania, New-York and Providence, have ſeverally commenced proſecutions againſt divers perſons and veſſels, engaged in this abominable traffic; the firſt named ſociety has been ſucceſsful in the two proſecutions they undertook in the Diſtrict Court of Pennſylvania and of the United States of America. The veſſels have been condemned, and actions are pending againſt the maſters and owners in the Circuit Court of the United States in and for the Pennſylvania diſtrict of the middle

middle circuit. There is good ground to believe that the other ſocieties will meet with equal ſucceſs.

Beſides the information mutually given by ſocieties to each other as occaſion may require, to aſſiſt them in checking ſuch clandeſtine practices, we believe it would be highly uſeful to forward every particular that comes to your knowledge on this ſubject, to the next Convention, who may make a very important uſe of it.

The difficulties which have continually occurred reſpecting the blacks and people of color who have for ſeveral years paſt emigrated from the French Weſt-Indies into the United States have engaged the attention of this and the preceding Conventions. To remove theſe difficulties, we tranſmit you a certified copy of an authenticated decree of the National Convention of France, of the ſixteenth Pluvioſe, ſecond year of the Republic; (February fifth, 1794) which has been lately received by the Pennſylvania Abolition Society. With this decree, ſince fully confirmed by the French conſtitution of 1795, we believe you will have it in your power to afford every legal and effectual aſſiſtance to theſe unfortunate people.

There yet remains a ſubject which, though often urged, ſtill continues to demand our ſerious attention; we allude to the moſt proper means of extending the principles of juſt and equal liberty amongſt mankind: and

as we profeſs to aſſume no other powers than thoſe of perſuaſion and convincement, founded on the unerring baſis of truth and juſtice, we wiſh you duly to advert to the magnitude of the cauſe in which we are engaged, to perſevere with patience and fortitude in your applications to legiſlative bodies and courts of juſtice, for the relief of our unfortunate African brethren, and to continue to enlighten the public mind, by ſpreading as much as poſſible, all kind of uſeful information on the ſubject: that thus we may, in every form, and on every occaſion, be ready to plead the cauſe of the oppreſſed, in the language of perſuaſion and of truth. And then we ſhall have done our duty; and then we may, in humble confidence, look up for the bleſſing and protection of the great Father of all, *whoſe ways are juſt and equal*, and *who hath made of one blood all nations of men*.

It was, on motion,

Reſolved, That ſo much of the reports from the ſeveral ſocieties, as relates to the ſubject of the education of Africans, and their deſcendants, be annexed in the form of an appendix to the printed minutes of this Convention.

Reſolved, That it be recommended, that all communications intended for the enſuing Convention, be directed to the care of James Pemberton, Philadelphia, Preſident of the Pennſylvania ſociety for promoting the abolition of ſlavery.

Reſolved,

Reſolved, That Samuel P. Griffitts, Samuel Coates, James Todd and Robert Patterſon, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the minutes of this Convention, as well as of the addreſs to the free blacks, the addreſſes to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, and the letters and memorials ordered by this Convention; to have the minutes of this year's proceedings copied, and to give three months notice to the ſocieties of the meeting of the Convention next year.

Reſolved, That the abſtracts of the laws of the ſeveral ſtates, reſpecting ſlavery and ſlaves, as reported by the committee appointed to execute them, be referred to the committee for printing and diſtributing the minutes of this Convention; who are hereby directed to obtain any neceſſary corrections, and cauſe them to be annexed as an appendix to the minutes aforeſaid.

Reſolved, That the ſame committee preſent to the Speaker of the Senate of Pennſylvania, the thanks of this Convention for the uſe of the Senate Chamber.

Reſolved, That fifteen hundred copies of the proceedings of the Convention be printed and diſtributed amongſt the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

Adjourned, *ſine die.*

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

THOMAS P. COPE *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, May 9th. 1797.

APPENDIX.

Extract from the reports of the Abolition Societies reſpecting education.

New-York Society.

THE New York ſociety many years ſince, inſtituted a ſchool for the inſtruction of African deſcendants, in various ſpecies of knowledge; this inſtitution, which conſiderable experience has proved to be of the higheſt importance to the progreſs of emancipation and the welfare of the ſubjects of our care, has ſince the laſt Convention received a new ſhare of our attention, undergone a renovation, and is now on a more flouriſhing and reſpectable footing than at any former period. By an appropriation of the principal part of the funds of the ſociety, to this object, together with the annual dividend of the bounty of the ſtate, and the contributions of individuals, we have, at an expenſe of more than fourteen hundred pounds, purchaſed a building and lot ſuitable for our purpoſe, and the ſchool is now maintained at the rate of about one thouſand dollars a year. This inſtitution, as the Convention will obſerve from the conſtitution of the ſociety, is under the immediate inſpection of a board of Truſtees.* It is provided with a maſter

* *Conſtitution of the New-York Society, for promoting the manumiſſion of ſlaves and protectin ſuch of them as have been or may be liberated.*

ARTICLE VIII.

1. There ſhall be elected a Board of Truſtees for the African ſchool, to conſiſt of ten Members, beſides the Chairman and Secretary. At every ſtated meeting of the ſociety, the two Members firſt named on the liſt ſhall go out of office, and a new appointment of the like number be made.

2. The Truſtees are to meet ſtatedly once every month, and at ſuch other times as the Chairman ſhall require, and at ſuch places as he may direct, or the majority of them at any meeting ſhall appoint. Four of the Members with the Chairman ſhall make a ſufficient board to tranſact buſineſs, and if the Chairman be abſent five Members including a Chairman to be appointed for the time, ſhall conſtitute a board.

3. The Truſtees are empowered to procure the neceſſary inſtructors, and to provide all neceſſary accommodations for the ſchool, and to make contracts for thoſe purpoſes, which ſhall be binding on the ſociety.

maſter, uſher and miſtreſs, by whom the pupils are taught reading, penmanſhip, arithmetic, Engliſh grammar and geography, and the female ſcholars, in addition, needle-work. The number of ſcholars on the firſt of January 1797, was one hundred and twenty-two; of whom ſixty-three were males, and fifty-nine females, and this is about the uſual number; many of them being of ſufficient age to be occaſionally ſerviceable to their parents and maſters, ſome irregularity unavoidably happens in their attendance, but this is not ſo conſiderable but that more than two-thirds are generally preſent. The appearance, conduct and progreſs of this ſchool, in the opinion of the Truſtees, would do credit to any inſtitution of the kind, and is exceeded by none in the city.

On the whole they exhibit an example of ſucceſsful induſtry, highly honorable to themſelves, gratifying to their parents, encouraging to their patrons and conſoling to humanity. Mean while the ſpirit of improvement has diffuſed itſelf among many of their color, who have attained to years of maturity, without the benefits of inſtruction. An evening ſchool under the patronage of the Board of Truſtees, but not at the expenſe of the ſociety, has been inſtituted

They may make any regulations which they may deem neceſſary for the due government of the ſchool, and direct the courſe of ſtudies and diſcipline therein. They may inſtitute, at the expenſe of the ſociety, ſuch premiums as they may judge proper for the encouragement of the ſcholars in their learning; provided they do not exceed the ſum of ſix pounds in one year. They have power to regulate the admiſſion of ſcholars, and to aſſeſs ſuch taxes as they may think reaſonable and neceſſary on the parents, guardians and maſters of the ſcholars; regular liſts of which aſſeſſments are to be tranſmitted by them to the Regiſter, who is to record the ſame and deliver an atteſted copy thereof to the Treaſurer, who is to collect the ſeveral ſums aſſeſſed of the perſons in ſuch liſts named.

4. It is the duty of the Truſtees to viſit the ſchool once in every month; to examine the ſcholars as to their proficiency and conduct, and to cauſe to be made a written report of the ſtate of the ſchool and of their proceedings, to every ſtated meeting of the ſociety; and to give any further information reſpecting the ſchool and the objects of their appointment, which they may judge neceſſary.

5. The Chairman ſhall preſide at all meetings of the Truſtees, and preſerve order therein, and ſhall have a caſting vote and no other. He may call ſpecial meetings whenever he ſhall think proper, or whenever requeſted by any two of the Truſtees. He is to ſign all reports and other official acts of the board.

6. The Secretary is to keep fair and regular minutes of the proceedings of the Truſtees, to give notice to the Truſtees of the times and places of meeting, and, under the direction and with the aſſiſtance of the Chairman, to prepare all reports to the ſociety.

inſtituted the laſt winter; this ſchool which is conducted by the maſter and uſher of the ſociety ſchool, for their own emolument, is ſupported by the pupils, who amount to forty-four, of both ſexes, and themſelves defray the charges of their education. Hitherto a degree of decorum and induſtry has prevailed among them much to their honor and advantage; and it will no doubt be gratifying to the Convention to learn that the uſher in either ſchool, is himſelf of African deſcent, and diſcharges the duties of his office with a zeal, fidelity and ſucceſs, worthy of his character as a man, and his profeſſion as a Chriſtian.

Pennſylvania Society.

EARLY in the year 1793, the committee of the Abolition Society, for improving the condition of the free blacks,* purchaſed

* *A plan for improving the condition of the free blacks.*

The buſineſs relative to the free blacks ſhall be tranſacted by a committee of twenty-four perſons, annually elected by ballot, at the meeting of this ſociety in the month called April; and in order to perform the different ſervices with expedition, regularity and energy this committee ſhall reſolve itſelf into the following ſub-committees, *viz.*

I. *A Committee of Inſpection*, who ſhall ſuperintend the morals, general conduct and ordinary ſituation of the free negroes, and afford them advice and inſtruction, protection from wrongs and other friendly offices.

II. *A Committee of Guardians*, who ſhall place out children, and young people with ſuitable perſons, that they may (during a moderate time of apprenticeſhip or ſervitude) learn ſome trade or other means of ſubſiſtence. The committee may effect this partly by a perſuaſive influence on parents and the perſons concerned, and partly by co-operating with the laws which are or may be enacted for this and ſimilar purpoſes. In forming contracts on theſe occaſions the committee ſhall ſecure to the ſociety ſo far as may be practicable, the right of guardianſhip over the perſons ſo bound.

III. *A Committee of Education*, who ſhall ſuperintend the ſchool inſtruction of the children and youth of the free blacks; they may either influence them to attend regularly the ſchools already eſtabliſhed in this city, or form others with this view; they ſhall, in either caſe provide, that the pupils may receive ſuch learning as is neceſſary for their future ſituation in life, eſpecially a deep impreſſion of the moſt important and generally acknowledged moral and religious principles. They ſhall alſo procure and preſerve a regular record of the marriages, births and manumiſſions of all free blacks.

IV. *A Committee of Employ*, who ſhall endeavour to procure conſtant employment for thoſe free negroes who are able to work; as the want of

purchaſed on a ground rent of fifteen pounds per annum, a lot of ground ſituate on the north ſide of Cherry-ſtreet, between Sixth and Seventh-ſtreets, on which they ſoon after placed a frame building and opened a free ſchool for the inſtruction of children of color of both ſexes; in this ſchool are taught, ſpelling, reading, and needle work. Eleanor Harris, a black woman, being judged well qualified, has been employed as their teacher ſince the opening of the ſchool. Her ſalary is one hundred dollars per annum; ſhe is alſo provided with a dwelling in the houſe, and with fire wood. The children are furniſhed with the neceſſary ſchool books. The expenſes of this ſchool are defrayed out of the particular funds of this committee, raiſed by donations, legacies and annual ſubſcriptions. The ſchool is regularly viſited every month by the committee of education. The number of ſcholars who generally attend is thirty.

With a view further to extend the benefits of education to the Africans and their deſcendants, the above named committee for improving the condition of the free blacks, have lately procured additional contributions, ſuppoſed ſufficient to enable them to eſtabliſh two more ſchools, which it is expected will ſhortly be opened, one in the northern, and the other in the ſouthern part of the city.

The committee for improving the condition of the free blacks have alſo afforded pecuniary aſſiſtance to a ſociety of young

this would occaſion poverty, idleneſs and many vicious habits. The committee will by ſedulous inquiry be enabled to find common labour for a great number; they will alſo provide that ſuch as indicate proper talents may learn various trades, which may be done by prevailing upon them to bind themſelves for ſuch a term of years as ſhall compenſate their maſters for the expenſe and trouble of inſtruction and maintenance. The committee may attempt the inſtitution of ſome uſeful and ſimple manufactures, which require but little ſkill, and alſo may aſſiſt in commencing buſineſs, ſuch as appear to be qualified for it.

Whenever the committee of inſpection ſhall find perſons of any particular deſcription requiring attention, they ſhall immediately direct them to that committee of whoſe care they are the proper objects.

In matters of a mixed nature the committees ſhall confer, and if neceſſary, act in concert: Affairs of great importance ſhall he referred to the whole committee.

The expenſe incurred by the proſecution of this plan, ſhall be defrayed by a fund to be formed by donations or ſubſcriptions for theſe particular purpoſes, and to be kept ſeparate from the other funds of this ſociety. The committee ſhall make a report of their proceedings and of the ſtate of their ſtock, to the ſociety at their quarterly meetings in the months called April and October.

young men, chiefly members of the Abolition Society, who have kept an evening ſchool ſince the year 1788, for the inſtruction of black men, in reading, writing and arithmetic, during the fall and winter months. A ſchool room was furniſhed them by the overſeers of the ſchool held in Willings-alley, hereafter to be mentioned: they have generally employed a maſter, and have themſelves ſerved alternately as his aſſiſtants. The blacks are provided with books, &c. and taught gratis. The expenſe is now defrayed by voluntary contributions of the ſociety of young men. About ſixty ſcholars are at preſent taught in this ſchool. A First-day or Sunday ſchool is kept at this houſe in the ſummer ſeaſon, for the inſtruction of black men in reading and writing by the ſame ſociety of young men.

Beſides the ſchools more particularly under the care and direction of the ſociety, there are ſeveral others in this city, eſtabliſhed for the improvement of the people of color in various branches of uſeful learning.

In the year 1771, two ſchools for the inſtruction of black children, male and female, were inſtituted by the ſociety of Friends, on a lot of ground belonging to them in Willings-alley.—An houſe was built, and the ſchool ſupported by voluntary contributions from the members of that ſociety, until the year 1786, when by a legacy of Anthony Benezet, amounting to a ground rent of ninety pounds per annum, a donation of five hundred pounds ſterling from England, and ſome legacies in this country, all of which were veſted in ground rents, the yearly income of the the ſchool was near two hundred pounds—the ſalaries of the maſter and miſtreſs, expenſe of fire-wood, books and ſtationary, amount to about two hundred and thirty-two pounds per annum. The balance is made up by the ſociety of Friends. The teachers live in the houſe, rent free, and are provided with fire-wood—no children of color whether ſlaves or others are refuſed admittance to this ſchool. The average number in each ſchool is about forty ſcholars. Theſe ſchools are under the care of a committee of twelve perſons appointed by the ſociety of Friends, who viſit them regularly once a month.

In the year 1795, a number of young women of this city, formed a ſociety for the purpoſe of teaching black women and girls reading and writing. They have procured a ſchool room, give their perſonal attendance as teachers alternately, provide fire wood, and for thoſe who are not able to procure them, books and ſtationary. The expenſe is defrayed by voluntary contributions—the ſchool

is held in the evening during the fall and winter months—the average number of ſcholars who attend is thirty.

In the winter of 1796, a Firſt-day or Sunday ſchool for the education of the black people in reading and writing was opened by a member of the Abolition Society at the Methodiſt African meeting-houſe in Sixth-ſtreet, and held between the hours of public worſhip. From ſixty to ninety perſons, chiefly adults of both ſexes, uſually attended. The original inſtitutor of this ſchool was ſoon afterwards aſſiſted by ſeveral young men, moſtly members of the Abolition Society. The generality of the ſcholars were furniſhed with books gratis; the fund for defraying the neceſſary expenſes was raiſed by contributions ſolicited by the founder, who propoſes in lieu of the day ſchool to keep one in the evening on a ſimilar plan, during the winter ſeaſon.

All the accounts procured of the different ſchools concur in declaring, that the improvement and behaviour of the people of color is encouraging and ſatisfactory.

Alexandria Society.

THE committee appointed for carrying into effect the plan of education adopted by the ſociety, beg leave to make the following report, reſpecting the ſtate, progreſs and proſpect of the ſchool which they have organized in conformity with the aforeſaid plan.*

Your

* *Plan of Education*—Whereas the views of this ſociety are not only to obtain legal juſtice for the oppreſſed Africans and their deſcendants, and to mitigate their ſufferings, but alſo to ameliorate their condition in general as far as may be practicable; as well as that all others in indigent circumſtances, who may appear fit objects of the patronage of the ſociety, may receive benefit therefrom.

The ſociety contemplating theſe objects, and ſenſible that a proper education, directed to the improvement of the mind and the regulation of the heart, is a fruitful ſource of human happineſs, are deſirous that theſe unhappy people may be admitted to a participation of its benefits. But the ſociety being apprehenſive that little opportunity will be afforded them of attending to theſe important advantages during that part of the week allotted to bodily labour. It is therefore reſolved—that for the attainment of this deſirable end, Sunday ſchools be eſtabliſhed in this town, under the patronage and by the direction of the ſociety; on the principles and in manner following:

Your committee having divided themſelves into claſſes, and engaged Benjamin Davis as teacher, for four months, at the rate of ſixty dollars a year, opened ſchool on Sunday the eleventh of December laſt in Archibald M'Lean's ſchool room, on which day they admitted ſeventeen ſcholars: the number has increaſed every ſchool day ſince, and at preſent amounts

A committee of twelve members of the ſociety ſhall be appointed for carrying into effect this reſolution, a majority of whom ſhall conſtitute a quorum.

It ſhall be the duty of ſaid committee when appointed, to procure ſuitable apartments (gratis, if poſſible) for the accommodation of ſcholars to be hereafter admitted, and to employ, at the expenſe of the ſociety, competent teachers, to take the immediate charge of ſaid ſchools.

In theſe ſeminaries ſhall be taught, orthography, reading, writing and the more uſeful parts of arithmetic; and the morals of the pupils ſhall be carefully attended to.

Theſe ſchools ſhall be open indiſcriminately for the reception of children of indigent parents, whoſe circumſtances in life, exclude them from other means of education, but more eſpecially the children of free blacks and mulattoes, and the ſlaves of all who chooſe to ſend them; alſo, free adults of the aforementioned deſcription who may be thought able to pay, and the children of ſuch ſhall be admitted at a low rate of tuition, and all monies ſo raiſed, ſhall be appropriated to the ſole uſe of ſaid inſtitution.

The committee ſhall be choſen for one year in the ſame manner as other officers—as ſoon as convenient after their election, they ſhall divide themſelves equally into two claſſes, the firſt of which ſhall vacate their places at the end of ſix months, and the ſecond at the end of twelve months; ſo that one half ſhall be choſen every ſix months—and no member who ſhall have ſerved out the regular term of his appointment, ſhall be eligible for the next ſix months—in caſe of vacancies in their own body, they ſhall have power to fill ſuch vacancies till the next election.

The committee ſhall divide themſelves into three claſſes, one of which in rotation ſhall attend ſaid ſchools perſonally every Sabbath day, to inſpect the ſtate of them, ſee that the teachers perform their duty, and for any other purpoſes, which they may conceive calculated to promote the ends of the inſtitution.

Moreover if the committee ſhall not be able as ſoon as requiſite, to procure ſuitable teachers, or if at any time vacancies happen, in either caſe, the committee ſhall themſelves by claſſes, take charge of ſuch ſchool or ſchools as may be deſtitute till it or they can be ſupplied.

The committee ſhall, under the aforeſaid regulations, have a diſcretionary power in the management of ſaid inſtitution; they ſhall have the ſole right of admitting, rejecting and expelling ſcholars, of fixing the hours of commencing and breaking up ſchool: *Provided nevertheleſs*, that the concurrence of two-thirds of the members ſhall be neceſſary for the expulſion of any ſcholar whom they may deem unworthy of the inſtitution; they ſhall meet at leaſt once a month, for the tranſaction of buſineſs, and ſhall at each quarterly meeting of the ſociety, make report of their proceedings, and of the ſtate of the inſtitution.

amounts to one hundred and eight who have been admitted. Of this number ten have attended irregularly and agreeably to a reſolve of the committee paſſed the fourth inſtant, for excluding ſuch as abſent themſelves four ſchool days ſucceſſively without a ſatisfactory excuſe, your committee apprehend moſt of the above mentioned delinquents will vacate their places.

In regard to the advancement of the pupils in learning, your committee ſtate, that they have four who write a very legible hand, read the ſcriptures with a tolerable facility and have commenced arithmetic: eight others are capable of reading the ſcriptures, but have as yet made ſmall advancement in writing: fifteen can ſpell words of three or four ſyllables and read eaſy leſſons: ſome of theſe have been put to writing; the reſidue are chiefly learning the alphabet or to ſpell monoſyllables.

Many of the pupils (eſpecially thoſe of mature age) evince a ſtrong deſire and conſiderable aptitude for learning. Their deportment in general is orderly and reſpectful, and their external appearance very decent.

Your committee feel gratified in having it in their power to report thus favourably of the inſtitution. They flatter themſelves that its effects will be laſtingly beneficial in improving the minds and amending the morals of thoſe for whoſe advantage it was eſtabliſhed.

Your committee cannot diſmiſs the ſubject without earneſtly recommending this infant inſtitution to the vigilant guardianſhip of the ſociety; expreſſing at the ſame time their ſanguine hopes of its ultimate ſucceſs and extenſive utility.

A Table ſhewing the recommendations and requiſitions of the Convention of 1796, *and of former Conventions, and how far they have hitherto been complied with by each Society.*

I. *To ſend delegates to a Convention to meet at Philadelphia in May,* 1797.

New-York ſociety,	complied.
New-Jerſey ſociety,	ditto.
Pennſylvania ſociety,	ditto.
Maryland ſociety, *(at Baltimore)*	ditto.
Choptank ſociety, *(Maryland)*	ditto.
Alexandria ſociety, *(Virginia)*	ditto.
Virginia ſociety, *(at Richmond)*	ditto.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington *(Pennſylvania,)* Wilmington *(Delaware,)* Delaware, Cheſter-town *(Maryland,)* Wincheſter *(Virginia,)* and Kentucky ſocieties ſent none.

II. *To tranſmit certified copies of all the laws in the reſpective ſtates relating to ſlavery; as well of thoſe repealed as of thoſe in force.*

Connecticut	tranſmitted in 1795.
New-York,	in 1797.
New-Jerſey,	in 1796.
Pennſylvania,	in 1797.
Maryland,	in 1797.
Virginia and Alexandria.	in 1797, a copy of profeſſor Tucker's diſſertation on ſlavery, which contains the ſubſtance of all the laws of Virginia reſpecting ſlavery from its ſettlement till 1794. Copies of the laws ſince that pericd alſo ſent.

Rhode Iſland, Delaware, and Kentucky ſocieties have not yet tranſmitted.

III. *To forward correct liſts of the officers and other members of each reſpective ſociety.*

New-York complied in 1796 and 1797, number of members two hundred and fifty.

New-Jerſey complied partially.

Pennſylvania

Pennſylvania complied in 1797. Members five hundred and ninety-one.
Wilmington complied in 1796. Members about ſixty.
Maryland complied in 1797. Members two hundred and thirty-one.
Choptank, complied in 1797. Members twenty-five.
Alexandria complied in 1797. Members ſixty-two.
Virginia complied in 1796 and 1797. Members one dred and forty-ſeven.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties have not yet ſent liſts of their members.

IV. *An account of the proceedings of each ſociety in relieving perſons unlawfully held in bondage.*

New-York. Since January 1796, have had complaints from ninety perſons, Africans or of African deſcent—twenty-nine freed on the law prohibiting importation—ſeven as free born—two unſucceſsful—heavy damages recovered in ſome inſtances—twenty-one caſes now in ſuit—nineteen under conſideration.

New-Jerſey ſociety. Many manumiſſions have been effected ſince January 1796, but no preciſe information is yet received to what number and under what circumſtances.

Pennſylvania ſociety. It appears from the minutes of the acting committee of the ſociety, that many hundreds of Africans have been liberated through their aid ſince the inſtitution of the ſociety.

Wilmington ſociety. Has ſent a liſt of perſons liberated by their agency up to 1796, amounting to eighty ſince 1788.

Maryland ſociety at Baltimore. A variety of ſuits were inſtituted againſt the unlawful holders of ſlaves laſt year, and in conſequence many have been liberated—there are ſeveral ſuits now pending in law, which are expected to have the like favorable iſſue.

Choptank ſociety. This ſociety has exerted itſelf in favor of the Africans, for ſeven years; and been the inſtrument of liberating more than ſixty individuals, and has failed but in a ſingle application to a court of juſtice in their behalf.

Alexandria

Alexandria ſociety. Twenty-ſix complaints made to the ſociety—ſix perſons relieved on the law againſt importation; five will probably be relieved, the other fourteen caſes on which as well as on the above five ſuits are pending are doubtful. A ſuit in Norfolk court and one in North Carolina now carrying on at the expenſe of this ſociety.

Virginia ſociety. Nothing of material importance ſince the convention of 1796. Suits commenced before now pending in behalf of between twenty and thirty perſons.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Winchester, and Kentucky ſocieties ſent no account.

V. *A ſtatement of the condition of the blacks in each ſtate both bond and free, with reſpect to the property of the free, and the employment and moral conduct of all.*

New-York. The number of people of color in the ſtate of New-York not known—exceeds two thouſand—in the city names of one thouſand collected—of theſe more than half are free, employed as ſervants, labourers, ſailors, mechanics, &c.—a few are ſmall traders—condition tolerable—many in town and country freeholders—ſeveral worth from three hundred to thirteen hundred dollars—various aſſociations among the free blacks for mutual ſupport, benefit and improvement—one has a lot for a burying ground and the ſcite of a church worth fifteen hundred dollars.

In a ſtate of progreſſive improvement.

New-Jerſey. Condition, as to enjoyments of life and reſpectability, much the ſame as in New-York.

Pennſylvania. Complied with in 1796. See the minutes of the convention of that year—page 20 and 21.

Maryland at Baltimore & Choptank. The condition of the blacks from the information this ſociety has received is greatly ameliorated, and ſome few of the free are enabled to provide for themſelves without manual labor—moral conduct equal to that of the whites in like circumſtances—minute information not yet obtained.

Alexandria.

Alexandria. Generally ſlaves—their treatment leſs rigorous than formerly—moral conduct of the free generally good—as labourers preferred to the whites.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—none ſent.

VI. *Reports of trials and adjudications relative to Africans.*

New-York. None ever preſerved in this ſtate.
New-Jerſey. Sent in 1796.
Pennſylvania. None have been preſerved by the ſociety, but ſome have been publiſhed and others are now preparing for publication.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Maryland, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Alexandria, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—ſent none.

VII. *Endeavours uſed to obtain a repeal or amelioration of the laws reſpecting ſlavery.*

New-York. A bill for the gradual abolition of ſlavery brought into the Legiſlature at their laſt ſeſſion, but poſtponed till the next ſeſſion.
New-Jerſey. A bill brought into the laſt ſeſſion of the Legiſlature for a gradual abolition of ſlavery which is poſtponed to the next ſeſſion as in New-York.
Pennſylvania. A bill for the total abolition of ſlavery was brought into and read in the Houſe of Repreſentatives near the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion of the Legiſlature, but lies over to the next ſeſſion.
Maryland at Baltimore. No attempt has been made ſince the Convention of 1796.
Alexandria. Have drawn up and mean to preſent to the next Legiſlature, a remonſtrance againſt a late law of the ſtate which is peculiarly ſevere againſt Africans.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Virginia, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties tranſmitted no information.

VIII.

VIII. *The progreſs made in extending to Africans the benefits of inſtruction.*

New-York. Houſe and lot for a ſchool purchaſed by the ſociety ſince January 1796—ſchool has exiſted many years—more flouriſhing now than ever—property of the ſociety for its accommodation worth upwards of three thouſand five hundred dollars—annual expenſe of the ſchool one thouſand dollars—has a maſter, uſher and miſtreſs—ſcholars taught reading, penmanſhip, arithmetic, Engliſh grammar and geography—girls (additionally) needle work—number one hundred and twenty-two—boys ſixty-three—girls fifty-nine—improve faſt and behave as well as any other children—evening ſchool in the winter for free blacks, adults—taught by the maſter and uſher of the ſociety's ſchool—number, forty-four—uſher a black man.

New-Jerſey. Nothing done by the ſociety—a bill is now pending before the Legiſlature providing for the inſtruction of all children in the ſtate, which, if carried, will include the Africans as well as the whites.

Pennſylvania. Within the city and liberties of Philadelphia there are at preſent ſeven ſchools for the education of people of color; at which perhaps near three hundred ſcholars of both ſexes uſually attend—two other ſchools are about to be opened for the ſame purpoſe.

Maryland at Baltimore. Several children of Africans and other people of color now under a courſe of inſtruction—an academy (of which notice was given to the laſt convention) will be opened the enſuing ſeaſon, and ſuitable teachers provided.

Alexandria. A Sunday ſchool opened by this ſociety in December, 1795, for the reception of Africans and their deſcendants—the number of ſcholars who uſually attend is one hundred and eight—they are inſtructed in reading, penmanſhip and arithmetic.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Virginia, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties—no information received.

IX. *To eſtabliſh periodical diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery and the means of its abolition.*

Connecticut. No information this year —there have been ſeven or eight diſcourſes delivered before the ſociety, the greater part of which have been printed and circulated extenſively.

New-York. The firſt annual diſcourſe delivered before this ſociety the twelfth of April, 1797

Pennſylvania. Not deemed neceſſary in this ſtate, where the general ſentiments of the people are, in a great degree, congenial with thoſe of the ſociety.

Maryland. Complied with.

Rhode-Iſland, New Jerſey, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Alexandria, Virginia, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties tranſmitted no information on the ſubject.

X. *To keep accurate regiſters of all deeds of manumiſſion executed within the precincts of each ſociety.*

New-York. Attended to by this ſociety from the firſt, ſo far as depended on itſelf.

Pennſylvania. A regiſter of manumiſſions kept by the acting committee.

Maryland at Baltimore, and Choptank. The ſociety preſerve a regiſter—and all manumiſſions are matter of record in the county courts.

Alexandria. A regiſter is kept by the ſociety, manumiſſions are recorded in the court of Common Pleas.

Virginia. Deeds of emancipation are recorded in the county courts.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, New-Jerſey, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XI. *To diſtribute ſuitable publications tending to promote the deſign of the inſtitutions.*

New-York. Attended to partially.

New-Jerſey. Attended to generally.

Pennſylvania. Faithfully attended to.

Alexandria. Attended to, and a new publication is ſoon to be made on the ſubject of ſlavery.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Maryland, Cheſter town, Choptank, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XII.

XII. *To endeavour to free negroes from St. Domingo retained here as ſlaves, contrary to the decree of the National Convention of France.*

Pennſylvania. Acted on as caſes have occurred—from the other ſocieties—no information.

XIII. *To diſcourage the uſe of articles manufactured by ſlaves.*

No particular meaſures on this ſubject are repreſented as being adopted by any of the ſocieties.

XIV. *To diſtribute the addreſs to the free people of color from the convention of* 1796.

New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland, and Alexandria ſocieties—done.
Choptank ſociety. Not received till late by this ſociety.
Virginia ſociety. Done in part.
From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XV. *To ſend copies of the conſtitutions of the reſpective ſocieties.*

Connecticut. Sent.
New-York. Sent the original in 1796, and the reviſed one in 1797.
New-Jerſey. Sent in 1796.
Pennſylvania. ditto.
Wilmington. ditto.
Maryland. ditto.
Alexandria. Sent 1797.
Virginia. Sent 1796.
Rhode-Iſland, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties ſent none.

The following abſtracts of the exiſting laws reſpecting ſlavery in the States of Connecticut, New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland and Virginia, are publiſhed for general information—The inconſiſtency of ſeveral of theſe laws ariſes from the nature of the ſubject, and though much care has been taken to make theſe abſtracts plain and intelligible, yet we do not ſuppoſe we have fully ſucceeded in this firſt eſſay. We hope that fuller documents and more conſiſtent laws, will enable future Conventions to perform this taſk with greater perſpicuity and uſefulneſs.

By the exiſting laws of Connecticut:

Any negro, molatto, or indian ſervant or ſlave, who ſhall be found wandering out of the bounds of the place to which he belongs, without a paſs from a magiſtrate or from his owner, ſhall be treated as a runaway, and citizens are impowered to ſecure ſuch perſons and bring them before the magiſtrate, the owner being liable for all charges accruing thereby.

Ferry-men are required not to ſuffer ſuch perſons to paſs their ferries under penalty of twenty ſhillings for each offence, to the owner; and if free negroes ſhall travel without ſuch certificate, and be ſtopped or taken up, they ſhall pay all charges ariſing thereby.

Any perſon preſuming to buy or receive from an indian, molatto or negro ſervant or ſlave, any money or goods without order from the owner, ſhall be ſentenced to reſtore all ſuch articles and alſo forfeit double the value thereof, and treble, if the article is not to be obtained: and if the perſon ſo offending do not make reſtitution as awarded, then to be publicly whipt, not exceeding twenty ſtripes, or make ſatisfaction by ſervice. And any indian, negro or molatto ſervant or ſlave, ſo depoſiting or ſelling ſuch articles or money, if it appear they were ſtolen, or that ſhall ſteal any money or goods and ſhall be convicted, (although the buyer or receiver be not found) ſhall be whipt, not exceeding thirty ſtripes, and the things ſtolen if found, returned to the party injured, or the value if not found.

Any ſervant or ſlave, as above, if found from home after nine o'clock at night, may be taken before a magiſtrate, who may order him or her to be whipt on the naked body,

not

not exceeding ten ſtripes, and pay coſt of court, unleſs redeemed by the maſter's paying a fine not exceeding ten ſhillings: and any perſon entertaining or tolerating any ſuch perſons in his houſe after ſuch hour, ſhall forfeit ten ſhillings.

No ſlave ſhall be imported into this ſtate to be left or ſold, under the penalty of one hundred pounds.

Any perſon manumitting a ſlave is liable to the maintenance of ſuch ſlave; and the ſame as to negro, molatto and Spaniſh indian ſervants for time, whoſe time is expired; except a certificate be procured from the ſelect men empowering ſuch liberation, which they are empowered to grant if to a majority of them it appears that ſuch ſlave or ſervant, is able to ſupport himſelf and is of good and peaceable life and converſation.

No negro or molatto child, born after the firſt day of March one thouſad ſeven hundred and eighty-four, ſhall be held in ſervitude after attaining the age of twenty-five years.

No citizen or reſident of this ſtate, ſhall import or tranſport or buy or ſell or receive on board his or her veſſel, with intent to cauſe to be imported or tranſported, any of the inhabitants of any country in Africa, as ſlaves, or ſervants for term of years: upon penalty of fifty pounds for each perſon ſo imported or tranſported, and of five hundred pounds for every veſſel employed in ſuch importation or tranſportation; and all inſurance on veſſels ſo employed, or ſlaves or ſervants ſo ſhipped is void.

Any perſon who ſhall kidnap, decoy or forcibly carry off, out of this ſtate any free negro, indian or molatto or any perſon entitled to freedom at the age of twenty-five years, or ſhall aid or aſſiſt therein, being duly convicted, ſhall forfeit one hundred pounds, and in addition, ſuch ſum in damages as the court ſhall determine: *Provided* that nothing in this act ſhall operate to prevent perſons removing out of this ſtate, for the purpoſe of reſidence, from carrying or tranſporting with them ſuch negroes or molattoes as belong to them, or to prevent perſons living within this ſtate, from directing their ſervants out of this ſtate about their ordinary and neceſſary buſineſs.

Any owner, maſter or factor of any veſſel clearing out for the coaſt of Africa, or ſuſpected by any citizen of this ſtate, to be intended for the ſlave trade in any part of the world, may on declaration of ſuch ſuſpicion, made on oath to the naval officer, to his ſatisfaction, be required to give bond in one thouſand pounds that none of the natives of Africa, or any other foreign country, ſhall be taken on board ſuch veſſel,

veſſel, during her voyage, with intent to be tranſported as ſlaves to any other part of the world.

All perſons are required to give in to the Town Clerk of the place where they reſide, on oath, the names of ſuch children as are or ſhall be in their poſſeſſion, as are entitled to freedom at the age of twenty-five years, under penalty of forty ſhillings for every month's neglect, after the time fixed by this act.

No perſon ſhall tranſport or aſſiſt in tranſporting for the purpoſe of ſelling, out of this ſtate, any negro or molatto ſlave or ſervant for time, upon penalty of one hundred pounds. And all notes, bonds, mortgages or ſecurites given in payment for perſons ſo tranſported, are made void.

If any owner of a ſlave ſhall make application to any two of the civil authority, or one of the civil authority and two ſelect men of the town to which he belongs, for the purpoſe of manumitting his ſlave, it ſhall be the duty of ſaid authority if the ſlave is found to be in good health, and not more than forty-five years of age or leſs than twenty-five years, to give to the owner a certificate thereof under their hands: *Provided* the ſlave is deſirous of being made free, and this certificate enables the owner to manumit the ſlave, without incurring any riſque of after maintaining him.

By the act of the Legiſlature of the ſtate of New-York, paſſed the twenty-ſecond of February 1788, *and which comprizes all the laws reſpecting ſlaves, it is enacted:*

That every negro, molatto or muſtee, within the ſtate, who at the time of the paſſing the act, was a ſlave for life, ſhall continue ſuch unleſs manumitted, in the manner preſcribed by the act, or ſet free by ſome future law of the ſtate; and the children of ſuch perſon ſhall follow the condition of the mother, and be adjudged ſlaves. The baptizing of a ſlave is declared not to be a manumiſſion of ſuch ſlave.

Slaves under fifty years of age may be manumitted, by the owners of them, on procuring a certificate from the overſeers of the poor, or two juſtices of the peace, or the Mayor or Recorder and two Aldermen, that ſuch ſlaves appear

pear to be under fifty years of age, and of ſufficient ability to maintain themſelves, and having ſuch certificate regiſtered with the Clerk of the city, county or town, where the owner or ſlave reſides; without being obliged to give ſecurity to indemnify ſuch city, town or place, or to maintain them after they have become helpleſs through old age or infirmity. Slaves may, in like manner, be manumitted by will, if the executors procure ſuch certificate.

Or they may be manumitted at any age without ſuch certificate, provided the owner or the executors of any teſtator, or any other perſon, in behalf of the ſlave, will give ſecurity at the ſeſſions, or enter into a bond to the ſtate, to ſave harmleſs the city, town or place, from the charge of any ſuch ſlave. And, even if any ſuch perſon is manumitted by laſt will, or otherwiſe, and no certificate be attained or ſecurity given, yet ſuch ſlave ſhall be conſidered as freed from the owner or his executors, adminiſtrators or aſſigns, and he or they ſhall be liable to maintain them when they become helpleſs and unable to maintain themſelves. If the overſeers of the poor ſhall refuſe to give the certificate as abovementioned, the owner may appeal to the Quarter Seſſions, who are authorized to grant the certificate.

No perſon can ſell ſlaves to another who is unable to maintain them, under the penalty of twenty pounds; and ſhall ſtill be deemed owner of ſuch ſlaves.

Any ſlave ſtriking a white perſon may be committed by a Juſtice of the Peace, and be tried and ſuffer the puniſhment inflicted for *petit larceny*.

In all capital caſes, negroes or other ſlaves, ſhall have the privilege of a trial by jury.

Slaves convicted of any crime, under a capital offence, may on the requeſt of the owner, and at the deſcretion of the court, be tranſported out of the ſtate. Slaves are not admitted as witneſſes in any cauſe whatever for or againſt any perſon, except that in criminal caſes, their evidence may be taken for, or againſt, each other.

All contracts made with ſlaves, without conſent of their owners, are void. The owners of ſlaves are liable for their treſpaſſes to the value of five pounds.

No perſon ſhall harbour a runaway ſlave, or trade with a ſlave without conſent of the owner; under the penalty of five pounds.

To prevent the further importation of ſlaves into the ſtate, it is enacted—That any perſon who ſhall ſell, as a

ſlave

ſlave, within this ſtate, any negro or other perſon, who has been imported or brought into the ſtate ſince the firſt of June, 1785, or ſince the paſſing of the act, ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit one hundred pounds, to be recovered by action of debt with coſts of ſuit, one half to the Treaſurer of the ſtate, and the other half to the perſon ſuing for the ſame—and every ſuch perſon, ſo brought into the ſtate and ſold, is declared to be free—and if any perſon ſhall buy, or, as an agent, ſhall receive any ſlave, with an intent to export or carry ſuch ſlave out of the ſtate to be ſold, ſuch perſon or agent, ſhall, in like manner be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of one hundred pounds; and ſuch ſlave, immediately after he ſhall be ſo purchaſed, taken, or received, is declared to be free.

Abſtracts of New-Jerſey laws reſpecting ſlaves, &c.

The act paſſed the twentieth of October, 1694, prohibits the permitting any ſlave to carry any gun or piſtol, or take any dog with him into the woods or plantations, unleſs accompanied by his owner or ſome other white perſon by order of his owner, under the penalty of twenty ſhillings for the firſt offence, and thirty ſhillings for the ſecond, and ten ſhillings more for every offence after; to be recovered of the owner—Inflicts a penalty on ſuffering ſlaves to keep any ſwine without the owners mark, and provides that any perſon lending to any ſlave a piſtol or gun, ſhall forfeit the ſame or twenty ſhillings to the owner of the ſaid ſlave.

The act paſſed March ſeventeenth, 1713, prohibits the trafficking with any negro, indian or molatto ſlave, without the conſent of the owner or other perſon having the care of ſuch ſlave, under the penalty of twenty ſhillings for the firſt offence, and forty ſhillings for the ſecond and every other offence, and authorizes the taking up and whipping any ſlave that may be found five miles from his maſter or miſtreſſes habitation, or that may come out of any other province into New-Jerſey, unleſs ſuch ſlave have leave in writing from his maſter or miſtreſs, or is known to be on his or her buſineſs.

The twelfth ſection of the ſame act preſcribes the penalty of forty ſhillings for every time that any perſon ſhall harbour or entertain the ſlave of another without the conſent of the maſter or miſtreſs, excepting in diſtreſs of weather or other extraordinary occaſion, and if any perſon ſhall harbour, conceal, or aſſiſt in carrying away any ſlave who

ſhall

ſhall happen to be loſt, die, or be otherwiſe rendered unſerviceable, he ſhall pay the value of ſuch ſlave to the owner.

The thirteenth ſection provides, that no negro, indian or molatto, who ſhall thereafter be made free, ſhall hold or poſſeſs any houſes, lands, tenements or hereditaments in his own right, in fee ſimple or fee tail.

The firſt ſection of an act paſſed October twenty third, 1751, authorizes any Juſtice of the peace, on application to him made by the maſter of any ſervant or ſlave, to cauſe to be brought before him any perſon who may be ſuſpected of having ſold any ſtrong liquor to ſuch ſlave or ſervant without his maſter's conſent, and to tender an oath or affirmation that he has not ſo done, and his refuſal to take the ſaid oath or affirmation ſhall be ſufficient evidence to convict him thereof.

The ſecond and third ſections provide, that if more than five negro or molatto ſlaves ſhall meet and aſſemble together, (unleſs on their maſter or miſtreſſes buſineſs) they ſhall be apprehended and whipped, and if any negro or molatto ſlave ſhall be ſeen from his maſter's houſe after nine o'clock at night, except on his maſter or miſtreſſes buſineſs, or ſhall be ſeen to hunt or carry a gun on the Lord's day, he ſhall be taken before a Juſtice of the peace and whipped; but nothing in the ſaid act ſhall be conſtrued to prevent any negro or molatto ſlave from going to church or meeting, and attending on divine ſervice or from burying their dead with their maſter or miſtreſſes conſent.

A law paſſed March the ſecond, 1786.

Section I, Inflicts a penalty of fifty pounds for bringing a ſlave into the ſtate imported from Africa ſince 1776.

Section II, Inflicts a penalty of twenty pounds for bringing a ſlave into the ſtate though not imported ſince 1776.

Section III, Exempts from the above penalty perſons coming into the ſtate to ſettle, and ſtrangers making a temporary ſtay, provided the ſlaves they bring have not been imported from Africa ſince the year 1776, which ſlaves are not to be ſold in the ſtate.

Section IV, Gives ſuch penalties to the uſe of the ſtate.

Section V, Authorizes the manumiſſion of ſound and rational ſlaves between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five years, by writing under hand and ſeal, under the inſpection of two Overſeers of the poor and two Juſtices of the peace,

who are to certify the ſame, and gives the form of ſuch certificate, which ſhall exempt the maſter's eſtate from maintaining the ſlave ſo freed if he or ſhe, at a future, time becomes chargable, and orders the manumiſſion and certificate to be recorded in the office of the Clerk of the county.

Section VI, Gives the ſlave ſo ſet free, a legal ſettlement in the townſhip wherein the maſter or miſtreſs had a ſettlement when the ſlave was thus emancipated, and any poſſeſſion, duty, employment or paying tax, ſhall not give a ſettlement elſewhere.

Section VIII, Authorizes grand juries to take cognizance of inhuman treatment or abuſe of ſlaves permitting the Court to fine the perpetrator, not exceeding five pounds for the firſt offence and ten pounds for the ſecond, giving the penalty to the townſhip.

Section IX, Prohibits ſlaves freed in another ſtate, from travelling in this ſtate, and inflicts a penalty of five pounds per week on any perſon concealing, employing or permiting ſuch to live in their houſe or on their land, nor may a ſlave freed in Jerſey, travel out of the townſhip or county wherein he was manumitted, without a certificate of his freedom, ſigned by two Juſtices and counterſigned by the county Clerk under ſeal of the county Court.

A law paſſed November the twenty-ſixth, 1788.

Section I, Forfeits the veſſel, appurtenances and cargo, if fitted out for the ſlave trade.

Section II, Gives of ſuch forfeiture, $\frac{7}{8}$ to the ſtate and $\frac{1}{8}$ to the proſecutor.

Section III, Inflicts a penalty of fifty pounds on maſters of veſſels, ſeamen or other perſons for attempting to reſiſt, when about to be ſeized under this law.

Section VI, Provides that no ſlave that has reſided one year laſt paſt in the ſtate, ſhall be removed out with a deſign thereby of changing his or her place of abode if of full age, without the conſent of ſuch ſlave, teſtified on private examination before a Juſtice of the peace, and if under the age of twenty one years conſent as aboveſaid, together with the conſent, alſo, of parents if ſuch minor hath any, the Juſtice to make a record of ſuch conſent and give ſuch ſlave a copy thereof, with the name, age, former place of abode, the reaſon of ſuch removal and the name of the place to which he or ſhe is about to go; and any perſon removing or aiding, or abetting the removal of a ſlave contrary to

this

this act, ſhall forfeit and pay twenty pounds for every ſuch offence, half the penalty to the proſecutor and half to the poor. But this act is not to be conſtrued to hinder a maſter or miſtreſs who ſhall remove to and reſide in another ſtate, from taking his or her ſlave or ſlaves with him or her.

Section V, Puts negro and molatto ſlaves or free perſons on the ſame footing with regard to trials and puniſhments, in all criminal caſes with white people.

Section VI, Obliges maſters and miſtreſſes, to teach all negro and molatto ſlaves and ſervants to read, while under the age of twenty-one years, and for refuſal or neglect, inflicts a penalty of five pounds.

Abſtracts of the exiſting laws of Pennſylvania.

No perſon born in this ſtate ſince the firſt of March, 1780, ſhall be conſidered as a ſlave or ſervant for life.

Negro or molatto children born of ſlaves are to ſerve till the age of twenty eight years, and to be entitled to ſimilar treatment and freedoms with white ſervants.

Slaves not duly regiſtered before the firſt of November, 1780, or in caſe of run-aways or thoſe employed abroad as ſeamen within five years after that date, are to be conſidered as free—The maſters to be liable to the Overſeers of the poor, where ſuch negro or molatto ſhall become chargable, unleſs regularly manumitted before the age of twenty-eight years.

Trials of negroes and molattoes ſhall be the ſame as of other perſons —but the evidence of a ſlave ſhall not be admitted againſt a freeman.

When ſentence of death is executed againſt a ſlave, the maſter ſhall be indemnified for the loſs.

Slaves brought into this ſtate from other ſtates or nations, except the domeſtic ſlaves of Members of Congreſs, of foreign Miniſters and Conſuls, of perſons paſſing through or ſojourning but not becoming reſidents, and ſeamen in veſſels not belonging to any inhabitant of this ſtate; and (except in the caſe of Members of Congreſs, foreign Miniſters and Conſuls) not retained in the ſtate more than ſix months, ſhall be deemed free—but no ſhelter or relief from this act ſhall be given to run-aways from ſlavery or ſervitude.

No covenant of ſervitude or apprenticeſhip, ſhall be valid for more than ſeven years, or if under twenty-one when bound, till the age of twenty-eight years.

No negro or molatto ſlave or ſervant for a term of years, ſhall be removed out of the ſtate for the purpoſe of changing reſidence or otherwiſe fruſtrating the good intention of this law, without the conſent, legally obtained, of ſuch ſlave or ſervant; nor ſhall any perſon ſell or diſpoſe of any ſuch ſlave or ſervant to any perſon out of the ſtate—penalty ſeventy-five pounds.

Children born of ſlaves, to be duly regiſtered within ſix months after birth—otherwiſe the maſter to loſe all right to the ſervice of ſuch children.

No veſſel ſhall be fitted out from any port in this ſtate, for the purpoſe of carrying on a trade or traffic in ſlaves, under the penalty of forfeiting ſaid veſſel; and every perſon concerned in thus fitting out, aiding or abetting, ſhall pay a penalty of one thouſand pounds.

Huſband and wife, parent and child, in a ſtate of ſlavery or ſervitude for a term of years, ſhall not be ſeparated to a greater diſtance than ten miles, for the purpoſe of changing the place of abode, without the conſent of ſuch huſband or wife legally obtained; or, in the caſe of a child, that it be above the age of four years—penalty fifty pounds.

For kidnapping, or by fraud, force or violence, carrying away any negro or molatto out of this ſtate, a penalty of one hundred pounds, and confinement to hard labor from ſix to twelve months.

By the exiſting laws of Maryland,

Slaves imported or brought into the ſtate either for ſale or to reſide, ceaſe to be the property of the perſon importing or bringing them in and become free, except ſuch perſon be a citizen of the United States, coming with a bona fide intention to reſide and bring ſuch perſons with him as his property, on his removal or within a year after, ſuch ſlaves or their mother having been previouſly reſident for three years in ſome of the United States.

A citizen of this ſtate, owning land and ſlaves employed thereon in an adjoining ſtate, may bring them in for his own uſe but not for ſale; provided ſuch ſlaves or their anceſtors were reſident in ſuch adjoining ſtate before the twenty-firſt of April, 1783, and a liſt of ſuch ſlaves be filed with the Clerk of the county within three months in the form preſcribed by law. This privilege is alſo granted to a citizen of another ſtate owning land in this ſtate, to citizens of this, acquiring property in ſlaves in another ſtate, and to citizens of another ſtate acquiring property in them in this ſtate by marriage, bequeſt, diſtribution or as guardians, who may reſpectively bring in or carry out ſuch ſlaves.

A negro or other ſlave carried out of the ſtate by an executor, adminiſtrator or guardian, may be brought in again by the owner or proprietor.

No perſon can diſpoſe of ſlaves imported or brought in, or their increaſe, unleſs he ſhall have been reſident in the ſtate for three years preceding ſuch ſale, except by laſt will and teſtament, or for the payment of bona fide debts, or in caſe of inteſtacy.

Citizens of France ſeeking an aſylum in this ſtate and becoming reſident therein, may hold their ſlaves; provided that thoſe of a maſter of a family do not exceed five, and thoſe of a ſingle man three in number, and that a liſt of them be recorded with the Clerk of the county. They are not permitted to ſell them in the ſtate, and if a greater number than the law permits are brought in, they muſt be re-ſhipped within a year or they become free.

Perſons brought into this ſtate from any of the United States, and bound to ſervice for a term of years by the laws of the ſtate from which they are brought, ſhall ſerve no longer than ſuch laws oblige them.

Any perſon forcibly or fraudulently tranſporting or carrying out of the ſtate or bringing therein any free negro or molatto, knowing them to be free or entitled to freedom at a certain age, and ſelling them for life or for a longer term than they are bound to ſerve by law, forfeits eight hundred dollars for every ſuch offence, and in caſe of inability to pay, is to be adjudged to labor on the public roads for a period not exceeding five years.

Healthy ſlaves may be manumitted by writing under hand and ſeal, executed in preſence of two witneſſes or by laſt will and teſtament, provided ſuch ſlaves be under forty-five years of age and it be not in prejudice of creditors. Such manumiſſion muſt be recorded, and a copy of the record is received as good evidence.

No petitions for freedom are to originate in the General Court, but muſt be preferred in the Court of the county where the petitioner reſides, and at the inſtance of either party, a trial by jury may be had, upon which, either may challenge peremptorily, twelve jurors: no appeal is allowed from the judgment of ſuch Court, except on matters of law.

The attorney of any petitioner for freedom, is liable for all coſts in caſe of the diſmiſſal of the petition, unleſs the Court under all the circumſtances are of opinion that there were probable grounds, and no new petition can be preferred until the coſts of a former are paid.

Any perſon convicted of giving a paſs to a ſlave or ſervant or aſſiſting by advice or donation or loan the tranſporting of any ſuch ſlave or ſervant, or by other unlawful means depriving the owner of their ſervice, is to be fined not exceeding two hundred dollars.

Stealing of negroes or other ſlaves is puniſhed with death.

A free negro giving or ſelling a certificate of his freedom to a ſlave in order that he may perſonate the grantee of ſuch certificate and thereby obtain his freedom, forfeits a ſum not exceeding three hundred dollars, and upon non-payment may be ſold for a term not exceeding ſeven years.

Free negroes are not permitted to give evidence againſt a white perſon nor in favor of a ſlave petitioning for freedom; neither can they vote at elections or be elected or appointed to any office of profit or truſt.

A ſlave giving falſe teſtimony againſt another ſlave ſhall have one ear cut off on the day of conviction and receive thirty-nine laſhes, and on the following day ſhall have the other ear cut off and the ſame number of laſhes repeated.

No perſon is to join in marriage any negro or molatto ſlave with a white perſon under penalty of five thouſand pounds of tobacco.

Free negroes or molattoes intermarrying with whites are liable to become ſlaves for life except molattoes born of white women who become ſervants for ſeven years.

A white woman having a child by a negro or other ſlave becomes (if free) a ſervant for ſeven years, and if a ſervant is obliged to ſerve ſeven years after her preſent term expires; the ſame penalty is to be inflicted on a free negro having a child by a negro woman who is a ſlave, on a molatto woman having a baſtard child by a ſlave, on a free

negro

negro woman having a baſtard child by a white man and on a white man begetting a baſtard child on a negro woman whether ſhe is a ſlave or free.

The baptiſm of negroes or molattoes is declared not to give any right to freedom.

Maſters permitting their ſlaves to go about begging may be held under recognizance by the county Courts.

The owner of any negro or other ſlave who ſhall ſuffer ſuch ſlave to keep horſes or to raiſe cattle or hogs as his proper right, forfeits five hundred pounds of tobacco and ſuch horſes, &c. are alſo forfeited.

A perſon permitting his ſlave to go at large or to hire himſelf, and the perſon hiring or contracting with any ſuch ſlave, forfeits five pounds per month, except ten days at harveſt or in caſe the ſlave is a pilot.

Any perſon entertaining a runaway ſervant or ſlave, forfeits five hundred pounds of tobacco for every twenty-four hours, and if a free negro or molatto harbours any ſuch ſervant or ſlave he forfeits one thouſand pounds of tobacco. If he be unable to pay, the Juſtices may immediately order ſatisfaction by ſervitude or otherwiſe.

Negroes meeting together from home without licence from their owners or overſeers on the ſabbath or other holy day may be whipped by the conſtable not exceeding thirty-nine laſhes, and any negro of the owner of the place where ſuch meeting may be, refuſing to aſſiſt the conſtable ſhall receive thirty-nine laſhes. Any perſon encouraging the meeting of ſlaves except on lawful occaſions, forfeits one thouſand pounds of tobacco.

Any ſtrange negro coming on a plantation not his maſter's and not on his maſter's lawful occaſions, being ordered to go home and refuſing or delaying ſo to do, may be whipped by order of the owner of ſuch plantation not exceeding thirty-nine laſhes.

Slaves ſelling liquor or keeping entertainment at any muſter-ground, horſe-race, &c. without the order or permiſſion of their owners are liable to be puniſhed at the diſcretion of a Juſtice of the peace not exceeding twenty ſtripes.

A free negro or molatto living idle without any viſible means of maintenance, may be apprehended and obliged to give ſecurity for his good behaviour in a ſum not exceeding thirty dollars, and in default thereof, may be ordered by the Juſtice to leave the ſtate within five days, and if he ſhall refuſe to comply or ſhall return within ſix months, he

may

may be committed, and if he does not discharge the prison fees within twenty days, may be sold by the Sheriff for a term not exceeding six months.

Negroes and other slaves running into the woods from their masters' service, and destroying cattle, &c. upon refusal to surrender themselves or making resistance against persons legally empowered, may be killed and destroyed.

If any slave is killed in resisting any officer or other person endeavouring to apprehend him such officer or other person is indemnified from any prosecution.

A negro or other slave striking a white person is to have one of his ears cropt.

It is lawful for the Justices of the county Court, to punish slaves convicted of going abroad in the night, or riding horses in the day time without leave, by cropping, branding in the cheek with the letter R. or otherwise, not extending to life or to render them unfit for labour.

Any slave attempting or conspiring to raise an insurrection or to murder any person, or to commit a rape upon a white woman, or to burn any dwelling-house or out-house wherein there are persons or goods, is punished with death without benefit of Clergy, unless the Judges, in their discretion, think proper to substitute labor on the public roads for a period not exceeding fourteen years.

Any negro or other slave, convicted by his own confession or verdict of Jury of pettit treason, murder or arson, is to have his right hand cut off, to be hanged in the usual manner, to have his head severed from his body, the body divided into four quarters, and his head and quarters set up in the most public places of the county.

The full value of an executed slave is adjudged by the Court and paid to the owner.

A negro or molatto, guilty of pilfering or other crime or misdemeanor, cognizable by the county Court, may upon full proof before a Justice of the peace, be ordered to be whipped not exceeding forty lashes.

No negro or other slave is permitted to carry a gun or other offensive weapon from his master's land without licence, and any one offending therein may be whipped.

Abſtracts of the laws of Virginia reſpecting ſlavery.

Free negroes and molattoes are by the conſtitution excluded from the right of ſuffrage, and of conſequence from office too.

All negroes or molattoes, except ſuch as are houſe-keepers or reſide upon the frontiers, are prohibited from keeping or carrying any gun, powder, ſhot, club or other weapon, offenſive or defenſive.

Lifting the hand in oppoſition to a white perſon in any caſe, except a wanton aſſault on the negro or molatto, is puniſhable by whipping.

No negro or molatto can be a witneſs in any proſecution or civil ſuit in which a white perſon is a party.

Emancipated negroes may be ſold to pay the debts of their former maſter, contracted before their emancipation, and they may be hired out to ſatisfy their taxes where no ſufficient diſtreſs can be had—their children are to be bound out apprentice by the overſeers of the poor.

Free negroes have all the advantages in capital caſes which white men are entitled to, except a trial by a Jury of their own complection: and a ſlave ſuing for his freedom ſhall have the ſame privilege.

Free negroes reſiding or employed to labour in any town muſt be regiſtered; the ſame thing is required of ſuch as go at large in any county. The penalty in both caſes is a fine upon the perſon employing or harbouring them, and impriſonment of the negro.

The migration of free negroes or molattoes to this ſtate prohibited, and thoſe who do migrate to it, may be ſent back to the place from whence they came.

Any perſon having one-fourth negro blood in him is deemed a molatto.

No diſtinction made between negroes and molattoes, whether ſlaves or freemen.

Importation of ſlaves either by land or water prohibited—ſlaves brought into the ſtate and kept therein one whole year or ſo long at different times as ſhall amount to a year, to be free—every perſon importing ſlaves, ſubject to a fine of two hundred dollars for each ſlave imported—the ſeller or buyer to pay a fine of one hundred dollars.

No

No perſons to be ſlaves, except ſuch as were ſo on the ſeventeenth of October, 1785, and the deſcendants of the females of them.

Any Juſtice of the peace having notice of the importation of any ſlaves directly or indirectly from any part of Africa or the Weſt-Indies, to cauſe ſuch ſlaves to be apprehended and tranſported out of the commonwealth.

Slaves not to go abroad without leave in writing from their maſters, and if they do, may be whipped—any perſon ſuffering a ſlave to remain on his plantation for four hours together, or dealing with him without leave in writing from his maſter, is ſubject to a fine—a run-away ſlave may be apprehended and committed to jail, and if not claimed within three months (being firſt advertiſed,) he ſhall be hired out, having an iron collar firſt put about his neck—and if not claimed within a year, may be ſold.

Riots, routs, unlawful aſſemblies, treſpaſſes and ſeditious ſpeeches by ſlaves, are puniſhable with ſtripes at the diſcretion of a Juſtice of the peace.

The maſter of a ſlave permitting him to go at large and trade as a free man, is ſubject to a fine; and if he ſuffers the ſlave to hire himſelf out, ſuch ſlave may be ſold, and twenty-five per cent. of the price be applied to the uſe of the county.

Slaves not permitted to intermarry with any white perſon, yet no puniſhment is annexed to the offence in the ſlave, nor is the marriage void; but the white perſon contracting the marriage and the Clergyman by whom it is celebrated, are liable to fine and impriſonment.

Slaves not admitted to the benefit of trial by Jury—Juſtices of every county or corporation, conſtituted Juſtices of Oyer and Terminer for the trial of ſlaves charged with treaſon or felony—requires five Juſtices at leaſt to conſtitute a Court, and unanimity in the Court for his condemnation—allowed council to be paid by his owner—may object to the proceedings—thirty days allowed before execution, except in caſes of conſpiracy, inſurrection or rebellion.

To attempt the chaſtity of a white woman forcibly, is puniſhable by diſmemberment.

When any perſon conceives himſelf illegally detained as a ſlave, to make application to a Magiſtrate or to the Court of the diſtrict, county or corporation where he or ſhe may reſide and not elſewhere—petition for freedom to recite material facts, and the Court is to appoint council who ſhall report

report his opinion thereon before proceſs ſhall iſſue--penalty on any perſon for adviſing, aiding or aſſiſting a negro in the recovery of his freedom, in caſe he does not ſucceed therein, one hundred dollars, and be farther liable to the maſter in an action for damages.

Widow's dower in ſlaves ſaved to her, although emancipated by the huſband's will, in caſe there is not property ſufficient beſides to amount to one-third part of his eſtate—where part of the ſlaves only are emancipated, the widow's part to be taken out of thoſe not ſet free.

Huſband cannot emancipate his ſlaves by will ſo as to deprive his widow of her dower therein, if his other eſtate be not of value ſufficient to compenſate her for one-third part of the whole eſtate.

Selling of any free perſon for a ſlave, knowing ſuch perſon to be free, puniſhable with death.

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